LITTLE FOXES

E. A. HENRY

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To
Howard Warren

"The little foxes that spoil the vines"

LITTLE FOXES

Stories for Boys and Girls

By

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TORONTO

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To the
Girls and Boys of My Ministry

Preface

THE following short sermonettes or talks to girls and boys were given as the children's portion at the Sunday morning services.

As a child at church, the author remembers sitting with pins and needles in his feet, which were somewhere between heaven and earth, while he wondered what the preacher was talking about. He determined if the job was ever his, not to neglect the little people.

These are some of his attempts to interest them, and are given out in print because some seemed to think them worth preserving.

If they are, and will help anybody, the author will be content and happy. It has been suggested that the chapters might be used as bedtime stories.

There are some little gems used which are anonymous or whose authors are unknown. They were used in the addresses and are passed on with apologies for not being able to acknowledge authorship.

E. A. H.

Toronto.

Introduction

Winnipeg, 7th July, 1922.

Rev. E. A. Henry, D. D.,
Deer Park Presbyterian Church,
Toronto, Ont.

My dear Henry:

I have just looked into your "Little Foxes," and I am delighted to be able to say, with a clear conscience, that you have done a fine bit of work. The book is full of quaint philosophy, and it has the heart touch, too, that will give it wings.

It was a happy inspiration that made you use the vernacular of every-day boy and girl speech without descending to the vulgarity that so often mars the attempt to use vernacular English. The vernacular lends reality to your thought.

Then, too, I wish to congratulate you upon your admirable selection of illustration. Illustration in literature is a very fine art, and you have got the touch in your "Little Foxes." After all, that is the secret of interesting speech—the power of concreting ideas. A Congregation that will drowse or gape over the most logical argument will suddenly wake to alert attention in response to the phrases, "Once on a time," "There was once a boy," "I knew a man."

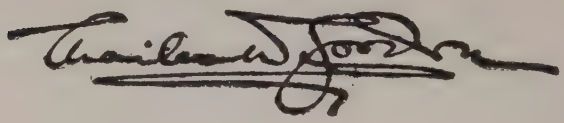
You have done a real service to the children, but

you have also done a real service to Preachers. For many a Preacher who has been forced to confess himself a failure in the art of interesting children in sermons (And how terrible a failure is that!), after reading "Little Foxes," will take new heart because of the suggestions your book will bring.

I venture to say that hosts of people, especially little people and those who think little people worth while, will come to know and love Dr. Henry because of his "Little Foxes."

And so may "Little Foxes" run far and fast.

Yours very truly,



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I

LITTLE THINGS

IN the second chapter of the Song of Songs and in the fifteenth verse you may read these words: "Take me the little foxes that spoil the vines."

How often you hear people say, "Oh, well, it's so little! What difference will such a little thing make?" And yet—

Every girl and boy knows that the mighty ocean is made up of tiny drops. The great Niagara is, too. Its noise is simply the small patter of drops multiplied into a thunder.

The little drops are made of molecules, which though Science gives them a big name, are so small you cannot see them.

A great castle or a mighty palace is built up of small bricks and stones and pieces of wood and iron, put together with small pegs and pins.

The lovely windows are made of panes of glass; each pane being sand grains heated and fused.

The great Western harvests that cover the plains with gold, and feed the world, come from little grains of seed wheat, any one of which could be lost and never missed. But if all the little seeds were lost, there would be no harvest.

These wonderful bodies of ours, Science says,

are built up of cells that are only known through the miscroscope.

We are now told that the matter that makes our bodies and the great world is a centre of the tiniest bits of revolving force called electric ions, which nobody has ever seen. A pin-head is not very big, but it has a whole system of these revolving little things as wonderful as the way in which the planets roll round the sun.

Across the continent stretches a great road of iron called the C. P. R. or the National R. R., and both never could have been but for littles.

The iron comes from ore in the mines, picked out with small picks, one pick at a time. The ties on which the rails rest are trees that once were little seeds. The gravel of the road bed is made of heaps of sand, shovelled with hand shovels, one shovel at a time.

The engine strength lies in pins that couple, and joints that unite all its wonderful parts. When the fire is started that makes the steam, the fireman builds it with small sticks and pieces of wood and spends his time shovelling little coals out of the tender.

When the train is loaded, it has a mighty weight; but each car was filled with bundles one at a time. The passenger coaches fill up one by one, with persons who travel with a little piece of paper called a ticket, that gives them right of way.

Little, you say! Why, there is nothing real that

is little! It only looks little on the surface. Think more deeply, and you will see how big all real things are!

So of your character and mine.

A big man is one who has big ideas and plans, and these can never be weighed or measured.

Big events are due to little long continued acts and thoughts, each of which looks small; but taken together make the world go round.

So little kind words, gentle deeds, unselfish acts, make life circles radiant and happy. If we offer nothing because what we have seems small, a lot of happiness is lost to the world.

So, too, little white lies make big black spots in character.

Little bursts of temper start fires that end in murder.

Little wrong words and little nasty deeds make wrong and nasty people.

Dear girls and boys, we are all bundles of habits, good and bad, and they grow from the smallest acts.

Just keep on doing a little deed day by day, and soon you cannot stop, for you have the habit.

A boy puckered his face a little each morning, and now he has a wrinkle he cannot iron out.

A girl puckered her life with an inside squint, and now she has a squint habit in her soul.

For the next few pages we will study some of the little things we need to be careful of.

The verse we have for a motto calls them "little foxes that spoil the vines."

You have all seen a beautiful garden, and can imagine what it would become if little sharp-toothed foxes got inside the fence and bit away leaves and stems and buds. There would soon be no garden.

The names and nature of some of these little foxes appear in the following chapters.

II

"IT'S NO MATTER"

WHEN a girl or boy is slovenly, with tously head and dirty hands; or washes the face and forgets the ears; or leaves a high water mark around the neck, and mother makes a remark on the way things look to her, the girl or boy says, "Oh, it's no matter." And first thing they know, a fox has bitten off a green leaf in their garden.

Or John makes a mistake and the teacher corrects it, and John says, "Oh, it's no matter."

Foolish John!

Say, boy, did you know an architect once made plans for a great building and when he went to work it out, nothing fitted, because away back in the beginning he made a mistake of *one inch* with his ruler, and it put the whole thing out of joint!

Or Mary, her mother's pride, did not put into her work quite enough time. She fooled over it, and played with it—and when the examination results came out, she failed. And when she saw her mother's sad face, she tried to comfort her by saying, "Oh, it's no matter!"

It seems so dreadful to see a man who has grown up to think things do not matter. His looks—"Oh, well, what's the odds how I look?"

Of course, it is only when he is married or else settled into a grouchy old bachelor he says this. If he is still looking forward—Huh! That makes a difference!

Some young fellows once were lounging about the street corner, when one of them saw a bright young girl coming down the street, and say! he went away so fast his companions wondered what had happened. Well, he did not want her to see him, for he felt it would matter very much for him if she saw his careless street life.

Or his clothes.—Sometimes you can almost tell what he had for dinner by the spots on his vest; and the whole thing started a long time earlier, when as a little boy he said, "It's no matter!"

And it is just the same with the girl. She grows up with a faded character and lopsided gait, and looks as though what she wore had been thrown at her with a pitchfork and sort of lodged on her person.

Sometimes she is real clever and knows a lot, but oh, the pity! She did not think her appearance mattered, and there she is, so that people look at her when she passes, and laugh.

It is very much worse, though, to let that spirit get past your body and your clothes and your outer habits, into the inside of you.

For then, when people see you doing things and saying things you should not,—things that make people look at you—the old habit, started when

you were a girl or boy, comes out, and you think it does not matter.

But it does.

It matters whether you are loving or unloving. It matters whether you are kind or ugly in temper. It matters whether you are at the foot of the class or its head. It matters whether you are neat or just a disorderly heap. It matters whether you are a sunbeam or a shadow. It matters whether you are growing up straight or with a lean.

It makes a big difference.

Of course it matters, silly child!

If it didn't matter, God would never have given us so many lessons in nature and history and biography.

Nearly everything in God's great world is telling us that—

"Life is real,
Life is earnest."

And it has an end; and it will be a poor end for her or for him who starts by saying, "It's no matter!"

There was a fellow once did that in a great Rugby game. He failed, and the team lost the match and the trophy.

A slip may seem small, but we can slip and fail, and do slovenly work once too often—and lose the game of life!

It does matter! It matters to God! It matters to you, and it matters to all who love you!

III

"I DON'T CARE"

THAT is one of the worst of all foxes, with a very sharp tooth.

A horse lost a shoe once, and the owner did not care. And some one wrote this verse—

> "For want of a shoe a horse was lost,
> For want of a horse a rider was lost,
> For want of a rider a battle was lost,
> And all for want of a shoe."

When I was a student at Toronto University, there took place one February night the great fire that became a college date, and practically helped to end the life of President Sir Daniel Wilson, who saw the building of his life labour go up in smoke.

It was the great social night of the college year. There were no electric lights in those days, and lamps were used. The building was gaily decorated with evergreens and bunting.

A college servant came down the east stair with a tray of lamps, and making a careless step, he stumbled, and the blazing oil started a fire, which, fanned by the air pouring down the great win-

dows, soon destroyed the great building. It all came from a careless step.

Just think of a tailor who goes around with his pants legs down over his heels and the edges all frayed, and a pair of dirty cuffs down over his wrists—what a poor advertisement for his trade and all because he does not care.

And you have a trade, too! Your business is to show every other girl and boy what a girl and boy ought to be; and if you don't care, then you can't show them anything except what they should not be. They should not be like you.

Or think of a girl or boy who is always making a mess of things.

They fail in school, and they grieve their parents, and they are no use to anybody. They get into trouble, and they get others into trouble. They miss the mark and are getting nowhere; and worse than all, they blind their eyes and close their ears. They simply do not care!

A young fellow once went mountain climbing; and I think he thought he was pretty sure-footed. Anyhow, he would take no advice as to dangerous places or how to watch his step, and one careless moment he stepped into a great crack in the ice called a crevasse, and it was twenty years before they found his body, after the slowly moving glacier brought it down to the place where the warmer regions broke off the edges of the ice!

And life has a lot of danger spots too; and it

needs care in the step, and to say you don't care may land you sometime in disaster.

In fact, if that spirit stays, I do not see how any one can escape disaster.

"I don't care!"—What does that mean?

It means you would just as soon be bad as good!

It means you would just as soon see things go wrong as right!

It means you would just as soon see things go down as up!

You think it makes no difference. But it does!

It means you shut your eyes and let things go!

Some great preacher tells of the wonders of the eyelids. They act so quickly and they can shut out so much if closed;—all the glory of the heavens; the wonders of the mountains and sea; the books of a library; the great world of people;—all shut out by closing the eyes!

You can shut your eyes if you like—and when you say, "I don't care!" that is what you do. You shut your eyes.

If you keep them shut long enough, you will go blind!

You don't want to be blind, do you? Then do not say, "I don't care!" Instead of that, Care.

Be careful—full of care!

IV

TEMPER

TEMPER is a fine thing to have.

A horse without any temper nobody wants. A man without temper is no good.

Temper is a word worth study. It comes from a root that means to control and not let get away and run wild. It means to mix up in the right way so that there will not be too much of anything.

And so temper means to give a good form to, by having just enough of what makes that form.

And perhaps because heat is used to mould things and helps in mixing, temper sometimes means heat; and when that heat gets inside us it warms us. And that inside heat is good. A cold heart or mind will not do anything.

Temper is not bad.

We get a lot of good words from temper; like temperament—what your character is like; and temperature—the amount of heat in the air; and temperance—the amount of self-control you have.

Unfortunately, the heat gets often too hot. And then we are people of bad temper. And if

you get too much of that, it leads to very serious trouble.

I went once to the gallows with a splendid-looking boy who did not mix things right, and got so much temper that he became a murderer!

Bad temper means lost control. To keep your temper is like riding a high mettled horse.—You have to keep firm hold of the bit.

When the present King George was Duke of York, he came to Western Canada, where I was a young minister. The people of Winnipeg gave him a great reception. The streets were lined, and flags and bunting made gay the city.

It was interesting to see the man who was to become the head later of the greatest empire in history. But I must confess there was a part of the procession that interested me more than even the Prince did.

It was his equerry.—The man who rode by his side on horseback. It was a wonderful sight. He was on the back of a magnificent black charger, with glossy flanks, and flowing mane and tail, and arching neck and prancing feet. Powerfully built, it seemed the ambition of the horse to hurl the driver from his back. The noise of the cheering and the bands added to his restlessness. He curved to this side and that; stood up on his hind legs; tossed his head between his feet; danced and careered around until you would wonder how anybody could stay on his back.

But that rider was a great horseman. He sat there as though he were part of the horse. With a firm hand and soothing voice, and a grip that kept the bit solid in the mouth of his prancing charger, he danced up the street a splendid sight.

And I thought, what a fine illustration of a strong life he was.

The man who can sit on his fiery temper, and hold it in control.

The Bible says: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

I suppose every boy here would envy Foch as he swept back the tide and took trench after trench until he broke the Hindenburg line.

But when you hold the bridle firm on your temper you can be greater than Foch.

Only those who have been West have ever seen a "stampede" where the cowboys undertake to break a wild broncho, or to ride on the back of an untamed steer.

I saw one once at Calgary, where a plunging broncho brought his four feet together, and bucked his back, and lowered his head, and the cowboy was hardly on his back till he was off again, and the broncho wildly galloping down the dusty prairie.

But it was a thrilling sight when, without even reins, just one little piece of rope, the skillful fellow, with his knees dug deep into the broncho's

side, mastered him, and came galloping up the track in triumph.

And it is just as fine a sight to see a girl or boy who can use this wonderful gift of temper, and never let it use them—who masters it and are never mastered by it.

Watch your temper, girls and boys. If it is kept under control it is a splendid gift. If it is not, it may ruin you!

V

SELFISHNESS

MY, that is a nasty little fox! If it gets into your garden it will spoil it, sure as guns!

Not that you and I are to have no selves. That kind of a person is an empty, silly, shallow body. You want the biggest self you can get. And you need to care for yourself. For if you do not, you will have no self with which to care for any one else.

And you need a true self-love, for if you stop truly loving yourself, you will soon have nothing with which to love any one else.

But selfishness means you cannot see anybody else but yourself.

Selfishness means putting yourself in the centre and expecting everybody and everything to dance to your music.

A little boy said to his sister, "Mary, there would be more room for me on this sofa if one of us were to get off!"

Was he not a selfish boy? Who would want to have that kind of child around—that expects the whole house to get out of his way so he could blow himself?

Some one tells a story of the sweetness of the unselfish life of a little ragged bootblack, who sold his kit to get a quarter to pay for a notice in the paper of the death of his little brother. When the kind newspaper man asked if it was his little brother, with a quivering chin he said, "I had to sell my kit to do it, b-but he had his arms aroun' my neck when he d-died!"

The news went round and that same day at evening, he found his kit on the doorstep, with a bunch of flowers bought with pennies by his chums, who were touched by his unselfish act.

There is something very attractive about a girl or boy who thinks of others and forgets self.

I have read of the wonderful St. Bernard dogs in the mountains of Switzerland.

There is a house called a hospice, 8,000 feet above sea level, where the monks live who keep the dogs to watch for lost travellers who may perish in the snow.

The dogs have baskets strapped on their backs, which contain food for lost men. They are trained so that they will find people and guide them to the place of safety.

The story that interested me was of an Englishman who wanted to see the dogs at work.

The monks told him that the best dog had been out for some time and they were becoming worried over his absence.

In a few moments, in the dog came, looking

completely discouraged. He seemed to have no spirit, although all his companions were barking and jumping around him. The old dog paid no attention, but went and lay down in a sort of hopeless way, without even wagging his tail—like all good dogs do that are pleased with themselves.

The explanation of the monks made me think.

They told the Englishman that that was the way the dog always acted whenever he had failed to help any traveller.

Just think, girls and boys, of the instinct of a well-trained dog—so deeply set on helping, that failure, even when he was not to blame for it, made him ashamed and sad!

Surely we will at least be equal to a trained St. Bernard.

Surely we should far surpass him, by voluntarily, of our own loving choice, seeking to help in a life of shining unselfishness.

I do not know any one who should be better able than a girl or boy to put into their lives the spirit of this little poem, whose author I do not know, but which I give to you:

LITTLE THINGS THAT CHEER

Just to bring to those who need
  The little word of cheer;
Just to lift the drooping head
  And check the falling tear;

Just to smooth a furrow from
A tired brow a while;
Just to help dispel a cloud,
Just to bring a smile—

Oh, the kindly little deeds,
As on through life we go,
How they bring the sunshine,
Only those who do them know.

Just to do the best we can,
As o'er life's path each day,
With other pilgrims homeward bound,
We take our steady way;
Just to give a helping hand
Some weary weight to bear,
And lend a heart of sympathy
Some neighbour's grief to share—

Oh, those kindly little deeds,
Our dear Lord notes each one,
And sheds His blessings o'er our way
Toward life's setting sun.

VI

IMPURITY

ONCE in California I visited the beautiful gardens of San Francisco and saw a very lovely flower.

Its petals were white, and when you opened up the heart, away down at the very centre was a shape made by the base of the pistil that looked exactly like a dove. It was a flower with a white dove at its heart. They called it the Holy Ghost plant of South America.

It is a fine thing when a girl or boy carries within them a white heart!

There is no sin that leaves a worse stain than the sin of impurity.

It comes by unclean thoughts and words and deeds; and when it comes, it is next to impossible to wash it out.

A man once looked at a dirty picture, and years after he had not forgotten it! It made for him a lifelong fight!

It is almost like putting nails in a post. You may draw them out, but you can never quite fill out the holes left. A growing tree may fill them and a growing life may, but there is always a scar left where the nail entered.

Some boys like to tell nasty stories, and if the boys to whom I talk want to have white souls they should turn from nasty story-tellers the way they would from drinking poison.

It is awful the way a dirty story sticks. It is so hard to get rid of its memory. It is like indelible ink that you use when you want some writing not to wear out.

The great General Grant, the United States hero of the Civil War, was once at a party where one of those men were who think it smart to tell such stories. Looking around, the man said, "I have a story to tell you. There are no ladies present, are there?" "No," said Grant, "but there are some gentlemen."

That story was never told.

Dear girls and boys, when any evil breath like that is around, think of your dear mother or your beautiful sister, and tell your heart you must be true to them.

"I must be true, for there are those who love me,
I must be pure, for there are those who care."

A newspaper published these verses that I think are so good. I would like you to learn them.

While walking through a crowded down-town
street the other day,
I heard a little urchin to his comrade turn and
say:

"Say, Jimmy, let me tell youse, I'd be happy as a clam
If I only was de feller dat me mudder t'inks I am.

She just t'inks dat I'm a wonder, and she knows her little lad
Could never mix wid nothin' dat was ugly, mean or bad.
Lots er times I sits and t'inks how nice 'twould be, gee whiz,
If a feller was de feller dat his mudder t'inks he is!"

My friends, be yours a life of toil or undiluted joy,
You still can learn a lesson from this small unlettered boy.
Don't aim to be an earthly saint with eyes fixed on a star;
Just try to be the fellow that your mother thinks you are.

And how can we keep the life straight, and in a true direction?

You remember the story of Ulysses and the Sirens—how he kept himself and his sailors from the influence of the enticing music when the sirens played on the dangerous rocks, by filling their ears with wax; and having himself tied to the mast till they passed in safety.

That is one way—the way of stiff stern duty and obedience to law. But there is a better way!

A boy once was trying to make a straight track in the snow. And he did. While the other boys left wriggling marks, his pressed straight on. When they asked him how he did it, he said he fixed his eye on a tree on the other side of the field and walked to the tree without looking to right or left. That is the way always to make a straight trail. Look at something ahead and go to it.

And we have that chance, for this is a splendid text for a girl or boy, or man or woman—"Run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus."

The eye fixed on Him and the feet moving toward Him will help make a straight life.

VII

"I CAN'T"

NO girl or boy ever says this about anything they love to do!

No matter how hard it is, if they like it, they try at least to do it. In fact, the harder it is, the more they try.

Who ever cares how many bumps he gets when learning to skate?

I saw a fellow once who was trying to vault over a pole. His chums laughed and jeered. "You can't!" they called out. Do you suppose he stopped? No! He kept right at it until he did.

Edison, the wizard of electricity, wanted to get a jewel point hard enough to be the right kind of an end for a phonograph needle. When it was suggested he could not get one, he just looked at the one who said it, and went right on and found it!

Every girl and boy should be like the man who refused to let that word appear in his dictionary.

When I was a little boy, I was brought up in a church where they would not sing anything but psalms. They called all others "man-made hymns" and one member of the church had sewed

up all the paraphrases at the back for fear he might open them by mistake. That was a very foolish, narrow way to act; but if you have anywhere in your book of life the words, "I can't!" just sew those leaves together so you will never see them!

For you can—if you will, and if you want to!

And if you can't, it is only because you won't!

I do not know who wrote these verses and will apologize for using them, but would like to pass them on to girls and boys:

IT CAN BE DONE

"Somebody said that it couldn't be done;
But he, with a chuckle, replied
That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in, with the trace of a grin
On his face; if he worried, he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done—and he did it.

"Somebody scoffed: 'Oh, you'll never do that;
At least, no one has ever done it.'
But he took off his coat, and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin;
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done—and he did it.

"There are thousands to tell you it cannot be
done;
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you, one
by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Then take off your coat and go to it.
Just start in to sing, as you tackle the thing
That 'cannot be done'—and you'll do it."

VIII

"I FORGOT"

OH, how much trouble this little fox causes! Out West near Fort William, once occurred a serious collision—all because an engineer forgot to watch the safety signals! A great train was wrecked and a whole railway district held up for hours; and some lives were lost—because a brakeman forgot to guard an open switch!

It's a bad fox, girls and boys!

It makes your character ragged and slovenly. It wastes people's time. It causes endless confusion. It holds up plans. Somebody forgets to do his duty and that upsets all some one else has to do; and so it goes on and around, until things become a regular mix-up.

There is a place for a good forgetter!

It is just to forget your worries and to forget yourself; and to forget the nasty things people do to you; and to forget your mistakes, if you are sorry for them; and to forget that you were not invited to somebody's party; and to forget that you fell down yesterday, if you got up again and are still on your feet!

But it is important to have a good memory too.

A little girl forgot to post her mother's letter, and it stopped the chance of a pleasant holiday for her grandmother, who was waiting for directions.

A little boy forgot to close the door of the nursery when he was told, and the baby nearly died of pneumonia.

In the days of the great war so recently closed, they had to spend millions of dollars on making shells. They had to be very carefully made. If a shell was more than 3/1000 of an inch more in diameter than was called for, it was sent back. It was important not to forget this. In fact, they had to watch against fuzz getting on the shell from the gloves worn by the workers.

One day an inspector found a shell that would not fit. Some one forgot to watch against the fine lint and sent in the shell which was at once sent back.

And surely if it was so important to remember all these fine points about a death-dealing shell, it is just as important not to forget the little things of life, that may spoil the whole day.

A bridge-builder made out all his plans and set the men to work, and when it was put together it was seventeen feet too short, because the plan-maker forgot one little measure that knocked the whole work out.

I read a rather strange thing that occurred across the line among our Southern neighbours.

A bill was passed, allowing certain goods to

come in free of paying duty. Among them were what was called foreign fruit-plants. You know what that stroke between the two words is. It is a hyphen that joins the words and makes them one. A clerk was copying the bill and forgot all about the hyphen, and made the bill read "fruit, plants," etc., and for a whole year, until their parliament met, all foreign fruit came in free; and they say the government lost nearly $2,500,000, all because a clerk forgot a hyphen and put in a comma instead.

But it is not only the mistake that costs, but if we will just think that it is the memories that store up our thoughts. It is the things marked in memory that we use for all our mind's growth.

A girl or boy who is always forgetting will some day find the life grown up and full of emptiness; for it is what you remember that makes the furniture in your soul's living-rooms; and if you keep on forgetting, your soul will have bare walls, and bare floors, and all you will hear will be echoes.

Be alert. Keep your eyes open. Attend to business. Put your mind on things. Do not say, "I forgot!" Be ashamed to! You have no right to forget!

You can pardon an old man whose teeth are all out and whose hair is all off, and who is bent with age, but you have no excuse.

Your forgetter has no right to be working at all.

Stop forgetting!—Remember!

IX

"BY-AND-BY"

"OH, dear me! What a child that is! Johnny, will you please do that errand for me?"

"Yes, Mother, by-and-by!"

"Mary, will you pick up your things and tidy your room? It looks as though a storm had struck it!"

"Oh, yes, I will, by-and-by!"

When are you going to do your home work? By-and-by!

When are you going to start that job you wanted to do? By-and-by!

When are you going to be useful? By-and-by!

When are you going to bed? By-and-by!

When are you going to get up? By-and-by!

When? When? When?—By-and-by! By-and-by! By-and-by!

> "By-and-by is a very bad boy,
> Shun him at once and forever;
> For he that goes with By-and-by
> Soon comes to the town of Never!"

They say that Rothschild, one of the wealthiest men of the world, made the beginning of his fortune by acting at the moment. He was in

Brussels and heard the report of the battle, and spurred his horse and paid a large sum to be ferried across a river; and got to London early in the morning before the news was abroad; and laid the foundations of his wealth in a few hours.

That is one of the roads to success—being prompt.

The dilly-dallying, shirking, waiting girl or boy will always be at the tail-end of things, and will never catch up enough to catch on.

Do you want to catch on?

Then do it now—not by-and-by!

There is a little poem printed in *Messenger for the Children.* I want to repeat it to you:

PUT-OFF TOWN

Did you ever go to Put-Off town,
Where the houses are old and tumble-down,
And everything tarries and everything drags,
With dirty streets and people in rags?

On the street of Slow lives Old Man Wait,
And his two little boys named Linger and Late;
With unclean hands and tousled hair,
And a naughty little sister named Don't Care.

Grandmother Growl lives in this town,
With her two little daughters called Fret and Frown;
And Old Man Lazy lives all alone
Around the corner on Street Postpone.

Did you ever go to Put-Off town
To play with the little girls, Fret and Frown,
Or to the home of Old Man Wait,
And whistle for his boys to come to the gate?

To play all day in Tarry Street,
Leaving your errands for other feet?
To stop or shirk, or linger, or frown,
Is the nearest way to this old town.

X

BOLDNESS

THERE is a splendid kind of boldness.

One day, years ago, sometime after the death of Jesus, two of His disciples, Peter and John, were arrested and brought before their bitter enemies who were ready and able to kill them. And Peter, the noble soul, stood up without a pang of fear and just told them face to face what he thought; and then the New Testament story says: "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John they marvelled."

It is a fine thing to see men and women and girls and boys who are not afraid to do and stand for the right.

Listen to this story which I will give you just as I got it:

He was small for his age, worked in a signal box, and booked the trains. One day the men were chaffing him about being so small. One of them said:

"You will never amount to much. You will never be able to pull these levers; you are too small."

The little fellow looked at them.

"Well," said he, "as small as I am, I can do something which none of you can do."

"Ah! what is that?" they all said.

"I don't know that I ought to tell you," he replied.

But they were anxious to know, and urged him to tell what he could do that none of them were able to do. Said one of the men:

"What is it, boy?"

"I can keep from swearing and drinking!" replied the little fellow.

There were blushes on the men's faces, and they didn't seem anxious for any further information on the subject.

Was not he the right kind of a bold boy?

Or what do you think of a lot of officers at a dinner, drinking and telling unclean tales.

Everybody had to tell a story or sing a song.

One young, shy fellow said, "I cannot sing but I will give a toast in water." And the toast he gave was "Our Mothers."

The rest were so touched by his splendid courage that they shook his hand and thanked him, and the Colonel said it was one of the bravest acts he ever saw.

A great Scotch preacher was so brave that it was said, "he never feared the face of man."

Every girl and boy should be bold in that way

—fearless, heroic, full of courage and with a stiff, brave heart.

Some day you will read and study Shakespeare, and he will give you this message:

> "What's brave, what's noble, let's do it, and
> make death proud to take us."

Another writer, whose name I do not know, is quoted as saying:

> "We make way for the man who boldly
> pushes past us."

Dear girls and boys, was it not a great moment for Canada when a little handful of Canadians stood at Ypres, in the first poison gas attack and dare to face it, and stand fast? Their boldness helped to stem the tide, and that first stand was the beginning of the events that won the war for the Allies.

That sort of a bold person makes history, and makes the history of their country.

The poet Emerson puts it this way:

> "Not gold, but only men can make
> A people great and strong.
> Men who for truth and honour's sake
> Stand fast and suffer long.
> Brave men who work while others sleep,
> Who dare while others fly—
> They build a nation's pillars deep
> And lift them to the sky."

But there is a boldness that acts on life like foxes in a garden.

It is seen in the rude, rough, saucy, forward girl or boy.

The boy who becomes a "smart Alec." Sometimes other boys call him "Smarty."

Or the girl who does not know how to blush; with no sense of shame. You can always tell them. She dresses loud, and laughs loud, and makes a fool of herself on the street; and he stares at you and acts impudently, and thinks he is manly.

They like to be looked at, and stare back.

They lack gentle, quiet refinement, and if that spirit grows, it will ruin the character and make the girl or boy disliked by everybody who cares for a gentleman or a lady; and in later years they will be ashamed.

Take a dictionary if you have one, and see the two uses of the word.

Bold—heroic, brave, gallant, courageous, fearless.
Bold—rude, without shame, impudent.

Which are you going to be?

XI

REVENGE

THIS is a fox whose bite brings blood.

It represents a very bad spirit.

It means, "I am going to pay him back." "I am going to get even." "You just see, I'll catch him and make him sorry!"

It does make him sorry, not in the sense of being penitent and wishing he had not done it, or longing to undo it; but sorry because of the blow he gets in return.

It is a bitter heart that takes revenge. It goes with a hard, unforgiving spirit.

It is an awful way for girls and boys to act, because they should be so bright and smiling. They are so fresh and sunny. They are so young they should not grow hard like an old shell.

They ought to be all mercy, forgiveness, kindness, because they have so much of it shown to them.

I hate to see a kiddie who is always looking for a chance to hit some one who happened to hit him.

Johnny Pay-him-back once was hurt when he was playing with a schoolmate, and instead of turning up a rosy face and laughing it off, the way the sun does when a piece of mud flies up in

the face of the sky, he opened the door of his heart and this little fox began to chew away all his finer feelings. As the fox chewed, Johnny chewed on his hurt, just the way he was chewing a wad of gum in his mouth. The more he chewed the hotter he grew under his collar.

You see, in your heart there is a cooling plant called Love, but the pesky little fox chewed it all up, and he got so hot that he paid the boy back and sent him to bed for a whole month to suffer pain; simply because he wanted revenge.

I read of a man once who was injured by another man of high rank in society, and he said to a friend, "Would it not be manly to resent it?" The friend answered, "Yes, but it would be God-like to forgive!"

It is not easy to forgive. It takes a real man to do it, but it makes you very much like God, who forgives us so much day after day!

And the gentle, forgiving spirit does so much to make the world bright, while the revengeful spirit adds so much to its gloom. Put that in a house or a school, and you pull down all the blinds and stop all the music of life.

Part of the horrors of the war were bred of revenge.

Germany had piled up all she could on France in 1870. France could not forget it, and the terrible thing about revenge is it burns so long. It may be that even now after victory, sparks of

that old fire are still burning in the heart of France. If it should blaze up nobody can tell how awful the results would be.

Brighten up your hearts by keeping them sweet with mercy.

Instead of making yourself dark with the desire to pay back—just shine up a little. Keep the air fresh, and polish off your windows and put the flowers of kindness on the sills and hand out mercy to those who pass by.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." And if you and I can't forgive, how can we hope to be forgiven?

Oh, there is nothing like the sunny life to cast out the shadows of hate.

It was the radiant sunshine of Pollyanna that changed a whole community and brought two people together who had not spoken for years; so

Smile, don't frown. Love, don't hate.

"Are you feeling cross to-day?
Stop and smile.
And of course, if you feel gay,
Why, you'll smile.
You will find that it will pay
If everywhere and every day
At your work or at your play
You will smile. Just smile."

It was a piece of fine advice one gave another. It was this:

"Smile a while,
And while you smile
Another smiles!
And soon there will be miles
And miles
Of smiles.
And life's worth while
Because you smile."

May I add:

Don't frown and groan
Or throw your stone.
But pile up high
Yes, just sky-high
Your joy and love.
Then by-and-by
Down from above
The holy dove
Will come and move
Our world with love.

XII

UNTRUTHFULNESS

"OH, what do you want to talk so much about that?" said a boy to his mother. "It was only a white lie!"

And the poor little silly thought that you got your opinion of a lie by its colour!

A bad man may be white, or brown, or black, or yellow, but he is a bad man all the same! The colour does not matter; and so is a lie a bad thing, whether it is little or big, or white or black.

I'll tell you why, girls and boys!

1. White lies give you a habit of telling lies, and when you get the habit you become a liar! In fact, white lies are almost the worse of the two, because a big black lie would scare you, but the little white lie eats into you without you knowing it.

2. White lies are like that awful disease called Cancer.

We hear a lot about it to-day, and the doctors are puzzled because they do not know how to trace it. But it eats and eats away until some of us have seen most loathsome forms of it consuming the poor body, while the life is still there, often in very intense suffering. And the doctors say,

"Take care of the first pimple and have it cut out." Cancer often starts in a tiny spot or the smallest growth.

Now, the liar is just the same. He starts with lie pimples—just little white spots on his language tongue, but they grow until they eat away his best life.

In the East there is a dread disease called Leprosy.

It often begins with a little white spot, which grows and grows until the body gets rotten, and the poor fellow who has the disease has to be sent away by himself. And white lies grow and grow until the man becomes an evil one, who sometimes has to be sent off by himself in a jail, and the boy is sent off to some industrial home to keep him away so he cannot hurt others, until he has learned a better way of talking and living.

Be afraid of a lie!

3. They make people whom you cannot trust, and almost anything else I would wish for you than to be one who cannot be trusted.

You can't rely on a liar. Not only one who lies with his tongue, but who acts lies. He gets by-and-by so full of lies that if you try to lean on him, down you go!

Out in the West, one of the great wheat elevators at Fort William suddenly slid down into the river, because the foundation was too weak to hold it up.

And a liar is like that! He is a bad foundation for home or school or society!

He caves in if any weight is put on him.

Let the girls and boys who study about these foxes watch this bad one, and be straight and true and upright and strong, so people can be sure of them.

I like the story I read once of a Scottish schoolboy who was called "Little Scotch Granite." When the boys were supposed to tell how often they had whispered in school—and if they had not at all, got a perfect mark called "Ten"—they got the habit of saying "Ten," even when they had broken the school rule. Little Scotty came, and although he was bright and full of fun he would not say "Ten"—although his record got very low.

But he changed the whole school.

He was always a good sport, but he never would tell a lie to save himself.

At the close of the term he was away down on the list, but when the teacher said he had decided to give a special medal to the most faithful boy in the school and asked to whom he would give it —forty voices called out together, "Little Scotch Granite!"

XIII

"I CAN'T BE BOTHERED!"

DID you ever hear any girl or boy say that?

"Sonny, go and do that little job, will you?" "Oh, I can't be bothered!"

"Johnny, your sister Mary is having a hard time with her home work. Go and see if you can help her." "Oh, I can't be bothered!"

A load of firewood was dumped at the back gate and Billy, who was lying kicking up his heels on the porch in the sun, was asked to go and pile some of it in the cellar. "Oh, I can't be bothered! Wait till Dad comes home, he'll do it!"

The next door neighbour had a sick baby and Nellie was asked to go to the drug store for something. Now, Nellie really loved babies and she was a good little kiddie usually; but she was busy on some ribbons she was fixing for herself—so busy she forgot to shut the garden gate and that fox came in and bit one of the flowers off her soul, and she said, "Oh, don't bother me!"

My, girls and boys, you let that fox loose in your garden, and he'll make an awful mess of it! He'll chew up the loveliest thing and leave a wreck!

If he gets abroad in the home or the church or the city, or society, he'll ruin things without a doubt.

Because:

1. If everybody said that nothing ever would be done to help anybody, this poor old world would be left so that none of us would want to live in it.

Of course, I know there is a lot of "bother" that we should not bother with—the "bother" that your mother means when she says, "Stop bothering the baby!"—the "bother" that means teasing, and vexing and annoying, and making yourself a nuisance.

But think where you would have been if your mother and father had never bothered over you.

Think of where the world would have been if all men and women had refused to be bothered about its history. It would have had no heroes, no authors, and no leaders, and what we call history would have been a perfect mess!

It is because savages do not bother that we have the dark places where the missionary goes and bothers his soul to help; and if he did not, there would be no progress; and if he never had gone, you and I would still be savages!

Whenever you are tempted to say, "Don't bother me!"—just remember and be glad that it was bothering about things gave you home and friends and school and all that makes your life worth while!

2. There is another queer thing about bothering.

A lot of girls and boys never think it half as much a bother to bother about some people outside as they do to bother about people in their own homes. Some boys, and girls too, can be as sweet as an all-day sucker when some other lady asks them to go a message, and as sour as a dose of vinegar when their own mother wants something done!

"Oh, yes, dear Mrs. Smith, it will be no trouble at all to take that letter to the post. I'll gladly go!"

"Oh, confound it, Mother! I can't do that! I wanted to go down to the pond to skate!"

Girls and boys! Don't say, "I can't be bothered!"

Bothering for others is the bliss of life!

If you want to be happy, aid some one to-day!

XIV

THANKLESSNESS

DON'T you love to hear the gentle voice of a child say, "Thank you!"?

Don't you like to see a girl or boy that feels and shows gratitude?

Everything in Nature seems to have it!

The birds twittering in the tree-tops always seem to be chirping, "Thanks." The flowers bordering the green lawn breathe out a fragrance that makes you so glad, it must be the odour of thanks! The sun is so glorious and scatters its rays so brightly, I think if you could hear it speaking as it shines, you would hear it saying, "Oh, I am so thankful I have all this power of sifting down these drops of sunlight!" When the rain sees the brown-burnt grass starting up into bright greenness, how thankful it must feel for its ability to refresh! I think even the wind is glad it can shake things up and scatter nasty germs and clean the air that people breathe!

"All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all."

And I really believe there is not one that is not glad and thankful for being and doing!

There is no spirit so dark, unhappy and unattractive as the one that is thankless.

Shakespeare says:

> "Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted
> fiend
> More hideous in a child
> Than the sea monster."

And again he says:

> "How sharper is it than a serpent's
> tooth
> To have a thankless child."

Once Jesus cured ten lepers, and you know leprosy was a dreadful disease that little by little ate away the body and turned it into a rotting sore; and of the ten who were healed of that frightful trouble, only one came back to say, "I thank you!"

Isn't it a lovely sight to see the sweet spirit of a thankful heart saying it—to find people who appreciate what you do—that is, who think it is worth something, for appreciation just means putting a value on, and they say so!

The Bible says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."

Don't keep it to yourself. Say so! Pass it on! Tell some one you are glad they did something for you!

Everybody dislikes a girl or boy who is like a sponge, always soaking in!

I saw a lovely flower once. At first it was only a dirty-looking bulb. But it was put in nice clean water, in a glass, and soon beautiful white rootlets began to fill up the bottle; and one day the bulb was so glad that it was no longer a nasty earthy-looking brown bulb, but had graceful white roots, and a bud shooting out that it burst in a splendid poem of thanks; only the poem was called a flower, and its name was Hyacinth!

We all love to see a thankful life—At home it makes the atmosphere so soft and helpful—At school it straightens wrinkles off the teacher and fills the room with light—With one another it acts like good oil in an automobile. It makes things run smoother.

And girls and boys, God likes it too!

There is a fable of a lion that lay hot and tired, trying to sleep, when some field mice ran over his body and made him so mad he clapped down his paw and was going to tear it when the little mouse pled for mercy in such a way that the lion set him free.

Sometime later he heard a great roaring and found it was the lion caught by hunters in a great net. He remembered the mercy of the lion, and telling him not to fear, he set to work with his little sharp teeth and gnawed away at the cords and knots of the trap and set the lion free.

It is fine to be thankful.

It is even finer to prove it by doing things that make others thankful.

Be thankful for home, and school, for church and gospel.

Be thankful you are not children in a heathen land.

Be thankful for your happy girl and boy life.

Be thankful God cares for you.

A minister once told a bishop of a wonderful escape he had from a burning ship. He called it a "great providence of God."

"Yes," said the bishop, "but I know a greater. I know a ship where nothing happened and it arrived safely." That was God's providence too, for which he was thankful.

And all your life God is working over you.

Are you thankful?

And do you show it by helping others and being kind to those who are kind to you?

There is a legend from Norway, that wonderful sea-washed land in Europe, so full of tales that girls and boys like. It is called the legend of the "Gertrude Bird."

It is a woodpecker that is said to have been a woman once, who was making bread, when two men passed by who happened to be Christ and His disciple Peter, although she did not know.

They asked for some of the dough, for they had had a long walk and fast; and she pinched a piece

off when lo, it grew till it filled the bake box. So she said, "No, that is too much," and pinched a piece off it, when the same thing happened! Three times it happened, and each time she got more selfish and hard and stingy. At last, as she saw how much dough she was getting, she said to the two strangers, "I cannot give you any. Go on, you can't stop here!"

They passed on and then she knew them; and oh, she got humble and sorry, and fell down asking for pardon, and the Christ said, "I gave you much, but you had no thanks. Now I'll try poverty. After this you must get your food between the bark and the tree. But because you are sorry, when your clothing is all black with your sorrow, it will stop, because then you will have learnt to be thankful!"

And so she was punished for a while by becoming a woodpecker, picking her food between the bark and the tree, until as she grew older her back and wings all got black; and then God turned them all white again!

Dear girls and boys, God loves you and me to be thankful!

XV

CRUELTY

THERE are two ways you can get a bad bite from the fox called Cruelty.

(1) By being cruel to people. Of course, most normal girls and boys would hardly like to be called cruel; and yet how often you can be without just knowing its name.

A boy that is a bully is a cruel boy. At school he likes to lord it over other boys, especially if they are smaller than he is.

I knew a boy once in a school in Toronto, who at recess was knocked down by a bigger boy who pushed his face into a snow bank and sat on him until he was in an agony of suffocation. I don't suppose the boy realized what he was doing, but he was a bully just the same.

He is the fellow who likes to see smaller fellows afraid of him, and likes to strut around with the feeling that he is cock of the walk!

I was going to a funeral one day, and saw a large boy on the street, seated on a small boy who was lying helpless on his back and enduring all kinds of nasty actions by the young bully. If I

had not been at the head of the funeral, I would have stopped and gone and spanked him!

How boys hate a bully. He is a coward, you know, at heart. A real brave boy will never take advantage of some one weaker and smaller than himself. A real brave hero protects others. The boy who hurts some one who can't defend himself is a mean coward. It does not matter how big his breast is or how far it sticks out, his inside heart is small, and narrow and hard. Now, don't you be like that!

(2) You can be cruel to animals—torturing them—loving to hurt them, just for the fun of killing. It is so strange the way some people think they are having no sport unless something is suffering.

"It's a fine day," some one is reported as saying, "let us go out and kill something."

We live in a day when Children's Aid Societies and Humane Societies are telling us of the beauty of a kind life, and that even animals are God's creatures and should be treated with reverence, or at least with the gentleness that will not cause unnecessary pain.

The cruel spirit hardens us. It takes away what learned men call sensitiveness; *i. e.*, it makes us so we do not feel. It makes our hearts like our hands sometimes get when not cared for—it makes callous marks; and when fine feeling is lost, we are less than we ought to be.

A little Indian girl, the educated daughter of a chief, said she could never forget the first time she ever heard God's name.

In her play she found a wounded bird by her tent and picked it up and said, "This is mine." One of the men who saw her said, "What have you?" "A bird," she said, "it's mine."

He looked at it and said, "No, it's not yours. You must not hurt it." "Not mine," she said, "then whose is it?" "It's God's," he said. "He can care for it. Give it back to Him." She felt scared and awed. "Who is God? Where is God? How will I give it back?" "Go and lay it down near its nest," he said, "and tell God there is His bird."

She went very softly back and laid it down and said, "God, there is your bird."—And she never forgot!

Be kind to all things, girls and boys.

> "There's nothing so kingly as kindness
> And nothing so royal as truth."

And watch carefully that you may not be a cruel girl or boy to any person or to any of God's creatures.

XVI

COWARDLINESS

IF there is any one in the world that a boy or a girl admires, it is a hero. You are all hero-worshippers.

You know how big you feel if you ever get a chance to shake hands with a great man who had made a name for himself, and if he is a great national hero and he speaks to you, why you never forget it; and you blow about it to all your chums!

When the Prince of Wales was in Vancouver, a little girl presented a bouquet to him, and I fancy she felt so big that her dress-waist grew very tight as she swelled up.

When I was a little boy, I had a very learned and eloquent minister; and I used to watch him, and made up my mind to be just like him, and to wear a gray silk hat some day. He was my hero.

It is a fine thing to be a hero and to love a hero; and one of the things we all believe our heroes possess is bravery.

No girl or boy would ever knowingly worship a coward.

The very fact that we have heroes that always stand to us for big, brave, noble people, should

make us anxious to be big, brave and noble ourselves.

Everybody admires Scott who died in the search for the South Pole; and Shackleton who died on his way to explore that part of the earth. Everybody has learned to think highly of the fearless John Knox, who was not afraid to talk back to the Queen when she did wrong; or Luther, who defied the Emperor and the whole Empire because he knew he was right. It was one of the greatest moments in history when the little monk stood straight up and looked his enemies in the eye, and said, "I will not retract. I can do no other. Here I stand!"

When you think of people like that, how it makes us ashamed of ourselves when fear grips our heart.

And yet, cowardice is not quite the same as fear.

Wellington, England's great general, once in a battle ordered a young officer to a dangerous spot. The young fellow turned deadly pale, but put spurs to his horse and went straight to duty. And General Wellington said, "There goes a courageous man. He is afraid, but he only thinks of duty!"

Nor is physical courage the highest kind. That is a matter of physical nerve and sometimes of health. But moral courage is still higher—the very highest kind.

A poet once wrote:

"One dared to die, a swift moment's pace
Fell in war's forefront, laughter on his face,
Bronze tells the tale in many a market-place.

"One dared to live the whole day through,
Felt his life blood ooze like morning dew,
And smiled for duty's sake, and no one knew."

Neither were cowards, but I think the second was the braver, don't you?

Now, there are different ways of being cowards and of being brave. If you can't stand sneers when you are right, but give in because of laughs, you are a coward at heart. If you are afraid to do right, you are a coward, but if you can do it even when you are afraid, you are a brave hero.

If you can stand against a crowd when the crowd is wrong, and stand there even if you are the only one, you are brave and will never have the coward heart!

The coward spirit, especially the spirit of a moral coward, eats the power out of your life, and the only way to avoid it is to dare to do right, and dare to be true.

Sometimes it takes a lot out of you, but it is worth while.

The boys who stood the trenches and braved bullets and shells and mud stains and never faltered, were courageous. Those who funked were always despised cowards; and the girl or boy who stands strong wherever duty calls is a brave life, and will never be bitten by the fox called Coward.

XVII

DISHONESTY

DID you ever really hear in your heart and believe in your very soul that "An honest man's the noblest work of God"?

What is honesty?

It is the quality of your character that always rings true.

You can always tell when a bell has a crack in it. It does not ring true.

And you can tell when a girl or boy has a crack somewhere in his character. He or she does not give a clear ringing sound. One of the worst kind of cracks is dishonesty.

You can't trust that kind of person. He always has to be watched.

What a horrid kind of child that is, from whom you dare never take your eyes!

But when you see a real honest girl or boy, how you admire the sight.

They will not cheat. They play fair. They are true sports. They won't take advantage of you when your back is turned.

You know how even in school games you like a real sport, who plays the game and obeys the rules of the game.

You can't have a game with any other kind. He spoils everything and you can't have real life with a cheat. He spoils the school and disgraces a house.

More than that, an honest person will not take what does not belong to them. A lot of girls and boys forget the difference between "mine" and "thine."

Then when they grow up they spoil society, and if they go far enough, they become that awful thing, "a thief."

An honest girl and boy is one with honour bright.

A looking-glass always shines when it is polished bright.

A pool of water is very beautiful when you can look right down into it and see clear through it—

And so is a boy and girl who has no mud in the eye or in the soul.

It is simply great to be a life on the square, aboveboard, with nothing to conceal; what is called transparent, so that the light shines throughout, with no pretending to be what it is not; no scamping work and trying to get things without paying for them. You can't anyhow! You always get in the end what you pay for.

Did you ever hear some one described as "four square"—standing true, upright, facing everywhere with a clear eye and an undimmed soul?

It is a fine thing to have a life with no spots in

it, and one of the very worst spots is to be false and dishonest—

And it always comes home some day—

A wonderful book called "Silas Marner" tells of a young man who stole the money that old Silas had gathered and kept under the boards of his cottage floor.

For many years no one ever knew where it went.

It nearly broke the heart of Silas, only in hunting for it he found the golden curls of a little child who helped to save him and make a good man of him.

Near by was an old pit, full of water, and some years later in draining off the water, they found a skeleton with a bag of gold beside him. It was the bones of the young fellow who stole it, and who had fallen in, years before, and been drowned.

But there at last, it was all seen, and his dishonesty was published to the whole district.

And dishonesty does come out, and even if the dishonest act is never known in itself, it comes out in the life that has lost its truth and beauty and grown mean and unworthy, so that nobody believes in it.

It leaves a bad black stain wherever any one is dishonest.

Therefore, dear girls and boys, be honest.

"Be true, little laddie, be true,
From your cap to the toe of your shoe."

XVIII

"LIMPY LATE"

THERE are some people who are like a cow's tail—they are always behind. They go to bed late and they get up late. They go to school late and to church. The only thing they are never late for is their meals, and if their mothers were like them their meals would be late too.

You sometimes read in the papers of "the late Mr. So and So," which means they are dead and are no longer Mr. So and So that used to be.

But there are some who do not have to wait till they die to be called "the late Johnny" and "the late Mary." They come strolling along after everything is started.

I taught school once, and had a scholar who came in any old time. He was a most trying sort of a boy. He always missed his lessons, and I did not know what to do with him. He loitered on the way and was absent-minded; and spoiled his class; and took up my time, for I always had to say a thing all over again for him.

One day I saw him coming and met him at the door with a very big welcome and offered to shake

hands, and told him how glad we all were to see him; and he was so ashamed he cried and was never late again. He did not want any more such greetings.

Even big people are like that.

If a Committee meets, they come in when it is partly through and waste everybody's time by asking what was done, and it has to be said all over again, and is very hard on one's temper.

They are not often late for a party, or for anything that is going to give them fun, but for real earnest things, they are never early.

They are like the Irishman who came panting to the station just in time to see the train moving away up the yard, and cried out, "Hie, there! There's a man aboard left behind!"—And girls and boys, if you practice the habit of being late, you'll be left behind too, and life's train will go off without you.

It's a very bad habit. It makes you slovenly. It puts ragged edges in your work. Nothing is ever done. You are always trying to catch up. You knock everybody's plans in pieces. It makes a nuisance of you; for who wants girls and boys who are always running up when they should be running ahead?

It puts a limp into you, and you stay at the tail-end instead of being what every bright smart girl and boy ought to be—up in the van, right at the front.

You don't want to be a tail-ender, I am sure—a kind of "might-have-been."

You should have some business get-up to you.—

"Alert and at the prow
Of life's broad deck
To seize the passing moment big
with fate
From opportunity's extended hand."

Take care of being Limpy Late, for if you let that spirit grow, some day you will be "Too late" and that makes two of the saddest words in the language.

XIX

"SISSY SLOW"

I REALLY believe some people are so slow they could not catch a cold.

If they ever get one, they really do not get it,—it gets them.

They are like molasses in winter—there is no run to it.—And the worst is, they do not think it is very important.

But it is.

I know all about the old proverb, "Slow and steady wins the race." But I think the real word of value there is "steady" and the proverb was never meant to tell any one to tie up their feet and crawl along. It was meant to tell you to keep at it. Even if you are not clever and brilliant you can get there just the same. And so you can.

Lots of girls and boys have had bright brains and great gifts, but they do not use them, and somebody who has less gifts passes them, because they work hard, and stick to it.

They are like postage stamps. They stick!

Their perseverance conquers difficulties, and keeping at it steadily, readily, constantly, they arrive at the goal, while the more gifted ones, trust-

ing to what they think is their inspiration, forget the need of perspiration, and never get anywhere.

That is all true, but it is a mistake just the same to be slow.

In fact, the successful people are not slow. They are quick to see the end and march straight at it.

Quick does not necessarily mean galloping. Quick is just another word for alive. The quick girl and boy have life in them.

The slow girl and boy are only half alive. Their step has no spring. Their eyes have no gleam. Their movements have no brightness. They never do anything. It is impossible to do unless you are alive. It is the lively, lifelike people who do things.

Life always is like that.

Wherever you have life, you have action.

And it is so unnatural for you; for if there is anything that should describe a natural normal girl or boy, it is liveliness!

Sometimes, what people call "lively kids" are a trial. They keep you on the run looking after them, but I tell you, if they are guided and controlled, they become splendid men and women.

It is very queer to see a sit-still boy. You feel he must be sick. It used to be thought a very becoming thing for a girl to be a sort of lovely, good-for-nothing sort of wall flower. It was not supposed to be ladylike to be too stirring.

But now we look for the red-blooded, red-cheeked, blooming, alert, bright, breezy girl as much as we do a boy like that. That does not make a girl unladylike.

You can be a lady and still be alive. What's the use of a dead lady?

There was once a boy who came into the office of a big business place, carrying a notice that said, "Boy Wanted." He asked the manager if that was his sign, and the big man said, "Yes, you young monkey. What did you take that off the door for?" And the boy answered, "Well, I'm the boy!" And I think he got the job. He should have, anyway, for he was alive.

Oh, stop your slowness!

What do you want to shuffle along in that snail-like way for? Pick your feet up!

Get a move on!

Quicken your steps!

Opportunity lies just around the corner.—Run after it!

Things do not just happen. You have to seek things.

Jesus once said:

> "Ask and it shall be given you,
> Seek and ye shall find,
> Knock and it shall be opened unto you."

May I add just one word?

Do you know, girls and boys, the future of the

Church is in your hands? We elders are going to drop out soon, and we want you to be ready to take our places.

Do you know, moreover, that you get to a very important age between twelve and sixteen?

You make great choices then. It is called the age of adolescence. You are flowering out; and around those ages the highest of all choices are made—The choice for God and a religious life.

As we grow older we get set, like plaster, and it is hard to change. But you are plaster, like clay, and are being formed now.

If you let these days pass by you may never choose, and if you do not choose the Church, your country will lose what it sorely needs. Therefore, be quick now to make your choice.

Slowness here is fatal.

For you it is literally true,

> "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation."

And if a girl or boy is speeding up religiously, do not let any parent or any older person put anything in their way. Help them make the choice and in the days of youth remember their Creator.

Do not say, "Go slow." Say, "Certainly, 'Go Sure.'"

But let them come with all the sweet swiftness of these lovely, impressionable days, and help them speedily lay their lives at Jesus' feet.

XX

SHAME

IT seems queer to call shame a fox, does it not? For a girl or boy without sense of shame would be in a sad state.

But a lot of foxes look at first like something else. I have seen a fox that at a distance looked like a little dog.

There is a real shame that every one should have. But there is another kind just as bad as the vine-spoiling fox. It is the shame of the life that is afraid to show its colours.

You know in the war how proud every loyal person was to wear a little flag in the buttonhole; how we hung flags in our churches so every one could see where we stood. On all our public buildings the nation's flag was flung to the breeze, and even in our schools the girls and boys were proud to stand up and salute, and sing the national anthem.

You will see men everywhere who wear pins or seals or rings that show they belong to some society; and in college, the students hang on the walls the pennants with the names of their home town

or their college, and nobody blushes because they are there.

But, oh, how many girls and boys get so different when asked to show where they stand on questions of right and wrong. They blush, and apologize, and look so shy, and feel so queer—with their ears red and the goose-flesh running up and down their backs. They are out and out for some things, and very neutral for others.

Neutral may be a rather big word, but your mother will tell you about it when she goes to the dry-goods store. There are some ribbons whose colour you are not sure of. They are of no outstanding tint, a sort of dull gray with no mark to it. They call them neutral colours.

They may be all right. But girls and boys like that are a terrible sight.—Neither this nor that—ashamed to come out; afraid to say where they stand.

In the war, at one time, there were prominent people who were afraid to have a conviction on Belgian and French outrages, or on the sinking of the *Lusitania,* and it did not add to public opinion about them. It was called spiritual neutrality; which is just a big learned way of saying it had no character.

That spirit nobody in his heart admires. You girls and boys do not. You love to read about the knights of old, and how they wore their armour and rode their chargers, and carried their spears,

and did not blush to let everybody know who they were. Sir Walter Scott describes one in these words:

"Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
His helm hung at the saddle-bow;
Well by his visage you might know
He was a stalwart knight and keen,
And had in many a battle been.
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Showed spirit proud, and prompt to ire;
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak;
His square-turned joints, and strength of limb,
Showed him no carpet-knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camps a leader sage."

Not a single one but threw his boast to the world of his plans and purposes. They were not ashamed. Their hearts were brave and the world saw the brave hearts through noble knightly deeds. They never tried to hide them. What a splendid sight to see one who wears his colours outside, and never lowers his flag!

A lot of soldiers won V. C.'s in the war and deserved the honour. Some who deserved it never got it; and some deserve it in peace as well as in war.

A disaster took place in a mine where eleven men and a boy were working. Ten died, leaving one man and the boy. The man wrapped his over-

coat around the boy, covered his own eyes with his sleeve, turned his back on the flames and backed through it all and brought the boy to safety, although his skin was charred.

He was a hero equal to any V. C. He had a brave heart, and was not ashamed to do what it told him.

Do you show your colours? Are you afraid to let people see the real thing in your heart? You want to be kind and good and true. Does anybody know? Do you keep your colours waving?

In the Great War, how we all shouted, "We'll never let the old flag fall." That was fine, and we did not let it fall, and we were not ashamed.

Will you be ashamed to do the right or speak the right? Will you fear the face of some other girl or boy, and slink away from your duty?

If you do, that wretched fox of shame will have given you a bite that will take a long time to cure.

XXI

"A BATTERED WARSHIP"

IN the days of the Great War I was a minister in Vancouver. One day I went to Esquimault, which was the station for the Pacific squadron of the British Navy.

There entered the harbour one of the cruisers which had passed through a naval battle. It was H. M. S. *Kent*. It was a touching spectacle to me. In appearance she showed all the marks of the experience she had gone through.

Painted in the dull gray of the navy, she stood at anchor, scarred and marred by service. The enemy shot had set ablaze her gun cotton; enemy shells had punctured the magazine; and through her funnels the cartridges of hostile ships had plowed their way. Decks were soiled and rigging torn; and her keel was covered with the sea growths that accumulate with long voyages.

She was so different to the spick and span vessels of pre-war days, with their fresh paint and shining spars and burnished brass fixtures and trimmings. But as I looked at her, I will tell you what I thought.

1. I said, "There are the marks of service." And it was a long service, for she was one of the older ships, but they were splendid marks. They

showed she was no harbour vessel or a parade ship. She had not dodged the issue or slunk away from storm and conflict. She had watched for the enemy and when sighted, she turned her prow in the direction of the fight.

You see in all our cities and towns the scarred veterans with their wounds and disabled bodies. And when you see them, take your hat off, for you are in the presence of the servants of liberty.

There are some marks that are always a disgrace.

A life marked by sin; a face that shows the sway of selfishness that cannot be hid; a body that carries the signs of living for mere pleasure—these have no honour with them.

The marks of evil always come, until if it continues, the forehead shows the mark of the beast.

But, thank God, marks of goodness are just as sure; and they are seen in the eye, on the face, in the walk, in one's carriage, the way one conducts oneself; and if it goes on, by-and-by the forehead will show the marks of God.

One of the very finest marks is the scar of service.

That grand old ship brought me a lesson to live not to be served, but to serve, so that the world is a little larger, better, stronger place because I have been in it.

2. I thought of the glory of being a defender of one's country. Some people think a patriot is one

who shoots firecrackers and sends up rockets, and pitches up his hat and hurrahs for things, and has a glorious time on a public holiday.

But a real patriot is a man who loves his country so much that he does all he can to ward off dangers from her. That was the glorious, wonderful, immortal work of the British Navy, not only for the Empire, but for the world.

She kept the sea paths open; she convoyed troop ships; she sank submarines; she blockaded enemy ports; she joined the allied navies in protecting the world's freedom.

And the old battle-worn vessel spoke to me and said, "What are you doing for your country? Are you defending her from her enemies? Do you know what her enemies are? Or do you care?"

Some poet speaks of,

> "The inextinguishable spark which fires
> The soul of patriots."

And Shakespeare said:

> "I do love
> My country's good, with a respect more tender,
> More holy and profound than mine own life."

That is a patriot, and when we are loyal to that spirit we win a true place on the honour list.

The man of highest honour is the one who serves his country for his love of her, and stands up against every foe that threatens her.

And you girls and boys can have a name on the honour list of your city. You do not need to die in battle to be an honour to your country. Sometimes it is as much an honour just to live for her.

In your private life, as a girl or boy, be and do your best; and in your outward life, stand always for the right and the true, and you, too, will be a defender of your country.

3. Then finally, I thought of the unassuming way in which it was all done. That is the case with all our best men.

A wounded soldier once after an operation, suffering agonies, told me it made him sick to have people come and slobber over him their sympathy. He did not want that. There is hardly a veteran who can be got to tell what he did. He just did it and let it go at that.

When one of the ships in a battle was so sorely battered that it was seen she must sink and be lost, the noble captain said, "Keep cool, men. Be British!"

Just doing your duty, without noise or parade; whether applauded or not; whether known or not; whether in public or obscure places—that is all.

When I left the harbour and turned my back on the old warrior vessel, the setting sun, that shines in such glorious colourings on the Pacific, bathed the gray ironclad in an outline of glory, and I saw the H. M. S. in new meanings, which I give to you.

Humility—Manhood—Service.

XXII

BOUCHER, THE FRENCH-CANADIAN VOYAGEUR

I WANT to tell the girls and boys a really true story, not taken from books, but told me from life by the man whose name is at the head of this tale. And I am going to let you draw your own lesson about the spirit that made possible his act.

You know the voyageur was a man used by the fur traders to bring the furs from the Indian lands to the settled parts of civilization. They ran the rivers and shot the rapids and travelled the woods, away from the far north Hudson Bay forts down to Montreal and Quebec. They were brave, rough, hardy men who shot rapids in birch-bark canoes, hunted for bear and muskrat and otter and beaver, and lived a wild, free life in the open.

I spent three months once, far north of Winnipeg in the Keewatin territory, among the Indians, and there I met Boucher, who told his story in broken English, a sort of mixture of English, French and Cree.

He sat in a little wooden shack with an old pipe between his fingers, a bed covered with mosquito netting in one corner and a table and stool in an-

other. His thin gray locks of hair were brushed back, and shaky fingers passed his pipe at intervals between his teeth.

The bare rocks behind and the deep Northern river in front; the cry of the loon one moment and the intense stillness of the loneliness the next, gave a weird feeling as the evening twilight added its shadows to the picture of the old man telling his strange story.

Sir John Franklin and his band of men had been lost in their quest for the Northwest passage. Boucher was one of those who formed a search party to try to recover the bones of the great traveller.

The journey tried their strength and heroism; provisions were used up and their safety became a matter of anxious concern. Their boots were torn off and their moccasins torn into rags. He told me how for hours he travelled the river, where blistering sands were varied by floating ice, and where the eyes were blinded by the shadeless heat of the sun and the reflection of ice and water.

They became mere skeletons, until at last the leader said some would have to go and hunt for food. Boucher volunteered, but in his search he lost his way.

With bleeding feet he climbed the rocks to peer out into the distance, looking for his companions. No one can know what it feels like to be lost, except those who have had that dreadful experience.

Lost in the wilderness, with no grub, no companion, nothing but what seemed a pitiless heaven above and a heartless nature all around, he shouted into an unheeding air, and only heard the sound of his own voice.

After hours of weary pain, he saw tracks which proved to be traces of his companions who had also left camp to hunt for grub. Following them in the hope of reaching camp, he was looking away over the horizon when he saw something dark. "Was it man or beast, dead or alive?" Soon he saw it move, and raise itself, and to his horror he saw it was a man, who turned out to be one of his own companions who had fallen exhausted and been left to die on the lonely trail.

What was he to do?

He could not leave him to perish; he could not stay long, for death was staring him in the face. To leave meant dark inhumanity; to help meant fearful suffering! But he was a hero, and took but a few moments to make his choice. He would stay with him and help him through, or perish in the effort.

The exhausted man said, "Leave me; we will both die if you stay." "No," said the brave hero, "I'll help you. Ah! I know how. My back is still left."

It took a lot of persuading, but at last, bending low, with all his wretchedness and hunger, with his bleeding feet and staggering body, he pulled

the man upon his back and started to trudge over that awful road.

Miles he travelled until the very flesh peeled off his feet—but he never stopped until the tracks led him back to camp, where he laid tenderly down his burden and fell in exhaustion that nearly proved his end.

It was all told me in the plainest and most simple way, with no boasts—just the quiet eloquence of a story of a deed done, because there was nothing else to do.

As I heard it I fancied I could hear the Indians up the hill in the little mission chapel singing, and this is what they seemed to sing:

> "Then scatter seeds of kindness
> For the reaping by-and-by."

For he who scatters help and service may suffer, but the glory of the crowning will more than make up for all the pains of heroism.

XXIII

"ONE BY ONE"

THE first thing we all do is to learn to count one by one.

At school when I began as a very little boy, they had an object called an "abacus." I hardly know where they got the name, but it was made of wires with beads strung on them, and it is found away back in the time of Greece and Rome.

These beads could be moved along the wires and so we learned to count, moving one bead after the other, one by one. I suppose girls and boys are not taught that way now, but we still have to learn to count one by one.

You can't multiply or divide or do any other of those lessons you all so dearly love in arithmetic until you can count.

All girls and boys love to count and add—stamps and pennies, birthdays and holidays; and nearly every little child loves to look at a calendar and number off the days. You just watch a boy with a bag of marbles or a purse of pennies, and see how often he counts them.

The love of a home is a love one by one. Your parents count their children that way. They never mix people up.

I read in some book lately the story of a man in New York State taking the census; that is, making a list of the people who live in the country. "How many children have you?" he asked. "Well, let me see," she answered, "there's Tom and Bessie and Billy and Jean and ——" "Oh!" he said, impatiently, "just give me the number." "Number!" the woman said with indignation. "We've not got to numbering yet. Do you think we have run out of names?"

The dear mother knew her girls and boys one by one, name by name. One will not do for another. Each one is loved, no matter how many there are.

It is always one by one. *You* count for something at home. You would be missed, even if there were a crowd. You have your place. The only thing is, are you filling it?

Often I have been visiting in a home where at a sick bed a mother has said, "It does not matter how many you have. You could not care to give up any one."

The names given to people nowadays are only tags, to keep them apart so we can distinguish them. They do not always really tell what a child is like. Bible names were supposed to do so. To-day, because a girl is called "Dora," which means a gift, she may not always act as though she were a precious gift to her parents. She may act like a boss instead. But the idea of a name at first was to let that child stand by himself alone.

They are not like policemen or even car conductors, marked by a number, but are known by name.

It is each by each and one by one.
So all the work of the world is done.

"One thing at a time, and that done well,
Is a very good rule, as many can tell."

If you let the one thing at your hand go, you will not get very far ahead.

"One step and then another,
And the longest walk is ended;
One stitch and then another,
And the longest rent is mended;
One brick upon another,
And the highest wall is made;
One flake upon another,
And the deepest snow is laid.

"Then do not look disheartened
At the work you have to do,
And say that such a mighty task
You never can get through;
But just endeavour, day by day,
Another point to gain,
And soon the mountain which you feared
Will prove to be a plain."

When I first went to college and looked over the four years' work I was nearly paralyzed. And when I began my ministry and thought of all the years of making two and three new talks every

week, and going to scores and hundreds of homes every year, I almost got into a panic until a sensible thought came into my head, and I said, "Now, old boy, do not be silly. Just read one book at a time and go to one lecture at a time, and pass one year at a time, and make one sermon at a time, and visit one home at a time,"—and I have done that ever since, and the years have just gone by with the speed of a streak of lightning.

Girls and boys often look far ahead and picture what wonderful things they will do when they grow up, and they wish they were women and men to do a great world's work.

Well, the way it all comes is one at a time. Each day's task and each day's duty brings you to the next, and so it goes, and life moves on grandly and surely—one by one.

> "Would'st shape a noble life?
> What each day needs that shalt thou ask.
> Each day will set its proper task."

And finally, God's love is a love for each of us—one by one. He says not a sparrow can fall without His will and the very hairs of your head are numbered.

Do you not love the little hymn which says:

> "God sees the little sparrow fall,
> It meets His tender view;
> If God so loves the little birds,
> I know He loves me too.

"He paints the lily of the field,
Perfumes each lily bell;
If He so loves the little flowers,
I know He loves me well."

The same great power that makes the sun and planets roll round on their path also controls a little child's toy.

The smallest atom is as much under God's rule as the mightiest world in the universe.

God knows you by name—just *you*. You, out of all the world!

The telescope shows us one hundred million stars, and telescope photographs add millions more. And when we say millions, it is hard to just grasp it all. But every single one is the object of God's eternal care and is not lost in the many. Neither are you nor I.

Some child story-teller has a beautiful message of an African chief who had a lot of oxen. Some one said, "How many have you?" "I do not know," was his answer. You see he could not count.

"How, then, do you know if one is missing?" he was asked, and with a shining eye he replied, "By the faces I would miss."

Is that not beautiful? The old chief knew the face and probably had a name for every animal.

Dear girls and boys, God knows you and cares for you, and has you all down by name and will miss your face if you are not near Him!

That is a wonderful love, and being a love for each of us one by one, we may well pray:

"Lord, for to-morrow and its needs,
I do not pray;
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin,
Just for to-day."

XXIV

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SOLDIER?

PLEASE note the word "good." There are soldiers and soldiers, but the best kind is the good kind who never brings shame to his regiment.

A story is told of a "parson in arms" who enlisted as a private because he loved the boys. He lived a fine clean-cut life of inspiration, became a captain and went over the top.

When the roll call took place after the battle there was no answer to his name, but later he was found with his forehead pierced by a bullet. Just before the charge he said, "Boys, we are about to charge. Commit yourselves to your Saviour. If you die it will be well; if you live it will be well."

He hated war, but did his duty, and told the men "there is no fitter place for a man to die than when he dies for men."

He was a good soldier and a good man.

First. He remembers the honour of the regiment is in his care. Some people call that "esprit de corps," which is the French way of describing the spirit that enters into and fills a body of men.

It is that spirit that makes the character of any collection of people. In your home, in your

school, in your church, in your club, in your class, in your country, there is a hidden spirit, just as your soul is hidden in your body.

To keep that spirit strong and noble is the ambition of every loyal person, and to do anything that spoils it hurts the school or the club or the home.

Now, a good soldier wants to keep the spirit of his company high. His question should be what kind of a company will this be if everybody was like me? And after all, it is what all are like that makes the real character of the whole.

Then second: A good soldier listens to the commands.

There are three leading commands.

(*a*) "Attention." That means keep yourself ready; put your heart and head into your work. It is the same thought that is often written on the corner of the streets where the cars cross. "Stop, look, listen." Get your mind on the job, and make it thorough!

(*b*) "Eyes front." Why does the soldier keep his eyes looking straight forward? Simply because side glances spoil attention. To keep looking around distracts, a word that means "draws apart." Instead of looking at one place, the eyes look everywhere and see nothing distinctly.

(*c*) "Obedience." Just think of a company with no discipline, where every man does as he pleases, and where orders may be followed or may not. Do you suppose the glorious Canadian army

could have followed the barrage at Vimy if they had not been trained to obey orders?

The good soldier is under orders and

> "Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why."

They are to take the order and carry it out and the objective is won.

Then third: After all the training, the good soldier adopts four attitudes.

(*a*) Ready for inspection. How the boys used to hate polishing buttons and smoothing puttees and brushing up, but it was all good and necessary. It made the soldier who could pass muster and who showed care for himself and the appearance of his regiment.

Are you ready for inspection? It takes place. Would you like to think that the Great Inspector of life is looking at you, and if He does, could you stand that look? What about your thoughts? If the full light were turned on, would you like them to shine out just as they are? A good soldier is never afraid of being looked at.

(*b*) "Semper paratus." When you get to the high school you will learn that that means "always ready."

When I was a little boy I used to love to watch the parade of the Tenth Royal Grenadiers, and when I hear yet the band play "The Grenadiers'

March," I can still feel the thrill of that wonderful regiment. Their motto on their crests and on their flags is, "Semper paratus." Whatever comes or goes; whatever orders are given; whatever work is to be done; we are ready.

(*c*) "Carry on." That means, push the job through. In rain or shine, in camp or trench, in defeat or victory, keep a-going. The war is not yours. It belongs to your country, and winning it depends on no one giving in.

(*d*) "Over the top." That is the end of it all. All the drill, all the discipline, all the training, all the marching, all the weapons; even all the rest times are to issue in the final charge.

The war is not for fun. It is desperately in earnest. It is meant to attack the enemy and wrest victory from him.

We all have sometime or other to come out into the open; out of the dugouts and trenches into the front firing line, and then over no man's land into the lines of the enemy.

Girls and boys, your battle is ahead of you. Now is the time to get ready. You are in the training camp. Home and school, and even street, are part of it. Would you not like to be ready for it all? Do you not think the end is worth all the toil?

Enrol to-day; listen to the orders; undergo the hard toil; be a good soldier; take the oath and live for it!

Many years ago every youth in ancient Athens, as soon as he was old enough, took a great oath. Here it is:

"I will not dishonour my sacred arms. I will not desert my fellow-soldier, by whose side I may be set. I will leave my country greater and not less than when she is committed to me. I will reverently obey the laws which have been established, and in time to come, shall be established by the judges. I will not forsake the temples where my fathers worshipped. Of these things the gods are my witnesses."

That is a fine oath for such early times, and filled with the modern Christian spirit. If you will take it, it will make of you a good soldier.

XXV

THE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—SHOES

SOME one says an army moves on its stomach, and I guess it does, for an empty stomach makes a poor traveller.

But it also marches on its shoes.

A poor fellow came to my church office one day to see if I could get him a pair of strong shoes. He was getting a job and his boots would not stand the strain.

In the army the boots are most necessary, because of long marches, and wet roads and soaking trenches.

One of the worst of all crimes was to make and issue bad boots to our fighting men.

There was an army rule that demanded care of the feet. Every man had to watch that part of his body, and the medical men were always seeing to it that that rule was kept.

Many a soldier had to leave his post because he had trench feet.

Donald Hankey, who wrote "A Student in Arms" and who was later killed on the Somme, gives a very tender tribute to the beloved Captain. He tells how careful he was of his men, how

thoughtful and wise, how his smile encouraged them, how he bucked them up when tired, and always played the game and tried to make every man do the same. Among other things he says, "When we started route marches, and our feet were blistered and sore, as often they were at first, you would have thought that they were his own feet from the trouble he took. After a march there was always inspection of feet. If any one had a sore foot he would kneel down on the floor and look at it carefully as if he had been a doctor."

It was all because he knew the feet were so important, and you can be sure he was greatly interested in the shoes the men wore.

Now, at home, boots are also important. Sometimes it is a problem to know just how to get enough of them; but every parent likes to see his girls and boys with feet well shod and comfortable.

If they are bad, they develop corns and sores, and they go to pieces, and then what use are they?

One day I was playing in a football team, and I guess the shoemaker did not put his best into his job, for my right boot cracked and the sole fell in pieces, and if I had not borrowed one from another chap I would have been out of the game.

We all feel sorry for a poor fellow who has no good shoes. Somehow or other, even if the rest of your garments are threadbare, one does not look quite so badly off if the feet are well shod.

There is an interesting Bible story in Joshua of

some of the people in Palestine who heard of the great deeds at Jericho and got afraid of Joshua and his army; and so they fixed themselves up like far-off strangers and took old sacks and old bound-up Eastern wine bottles and old garments and musty bread, and put old shoes on their feet.

The whole show worked on Joshua's heart, and he made a covenant with them, and when the surrounding people were conquered, these sly ones with the bad shoes were spared because Joshua, like the rest of us, felt sorry for people who looked so worn out.

What a splendid service is rendered by a good shoemaker, a real consecrated cobbler; and what a social wretch he is that makes boots just for pay, and passes out the kind that look all right, but are no use, and spoil the feet.

> "If I were a cobbler, 'twould be my pride
> The best of all cobblers to be.
> If I were a tinker, no tinker beside
> Should mend an old kettle like me."

Now, sometimes shoes are worn out without any good cause, like the copper toes a boy uses up, just by kicking, or the soles that go because he slides or slips along without lifting his feet square off the ground when he walks.

Parents get impatient at having to buy so many boots for children who wear them out so easily, and often can't show anything done.

But when a shoe is worn out by hard service, that old boot is quite an honourable object.

The worn-out shoes of the dear boys who fought over no man's land, or marched through the enemy's barrage, or stood for us in the blood and water stained trenches, are relics of honour.

A Spanish lullaby sings about the angels so busy that they wore out their shoes, but when the little tattered angels got to the doorway of heaven they were given new ones.

"Little shoes are sold at the doorway of heaven,
And to all the tattered little angels are given.
Slumber, my darling baby."

That is the strange lullaby sung by some Spanish mothers to put their babies to sleep.

There was a man named Bunyan, who once had a wonderful dream. It was about a sinner who became a Christian and who travelled from earth to heaven. He was shown many wonderful places and saw wonderful things, and had wonderful experiences.

Among the places he visited was the House Beautiful, and in it he was shown a great many things, and among them his guides showed him, "all manner of furniture which their Lord had provided for pilgrims, as sword, shield, helmet, breastplate, all-prayer, and *shoes that would not wear out.*"

Was that not a wonderful thing to have? How pleased your dad would be if he could buy you everlasting shoes. Well, there are such, and I will tell you what they are.

(1) An old legend tells of a maiden whose footsteps left flowers blooming. Wherever she went, things were a little brighter because she went there.

I knew a little girl who was called Little Sunshine, because she was like a ray of light. She tripped around like a dancing sunbeam.

To clothe one's feet in merry sunshine is to get a covering that can't fade. There is no wear to sunshine. It is always fresh and bright and welcome. That is the kind of shoes your mother wears!

"She sings a snatch of a merry song
As she toils in her home from morn till night.
Her work is hard and the hours are long
But the little woman's heart is light."

No one ever has sore feet who wears shoes of sunshine.

(2) The Bible says it is a good thing to wear shoes that are called "the preparation of the gospel of peace."

I wonder what that means? It is not easy to say, but I fancy it means we should be always ready to preach the love gospel of Jesus.

"What!" you say. "I preach!"—Why sure! a preacher is not only a man in a pulpit on Sunday.

He is one who delivers a message, and he does not have to always use his voice. Deeds talk too!

A young fellow was converted, so he said, by his mother's preaching—but she never said anything. She just lived so that when people saw her they thought of Jesus. He called it his mother's "translation of the Bible."

Our Bibles are changed from Greek and Hebrew into English. He said hers was changed from print into practice.

And those shoes that cover the feet with a Christ love message will never wear out.

There is a beautiful hymn we all love to sing. You can hear it on a victrola from a trained quartette and it sounds wonderful:

"I love to tell the story,
More wonderful it seems,
Than all the golden fancies
Of all our golden dreams.
And when in scenes of glory
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story,
That I have loved so long."

You see it does not wear out. It is the new song and the old story. It is like the love of a mother that stays fresh and strong right up to heaven's gate.

And even a child can sing it, by just being like Him whose song it is.

The girl or boy who lives the sweet, loving Christlike life and is like a little candle shining in the night,

"You in your small corner and I in mine,"

has gospel shoes on.

There is a song we used to sing:

"Brighten the corner where you are."

A little girl in my congregation used to sing it:

"Right in the corner, where you are;"

and I believe if you and I can brighten the corner, right in the corner, where we are, we will be using shoes that never wear out.

XXVI

THE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—THE RIFLE

YOU all know the difference between a shotgun and a rifle. A shotgun scatters the shot; a rifle centres the shot. A shotgun will splash the target; a rifle can make a bull's eye.

I had a medical friend who gave me what he called a shotgun prescription for rheumatism. It was made up of a lot of different prescriptions mixed together with the hope that if one did not hit the spot some other might. That is what a shotgun is like—it hits all round.

But a rifle puts its bullet just at one spot.

One represents concentration—the other scatteration.

When you examine the part of a rifle you see how it is made just for its work. There is the butt, by which you hold it steady; there is the sight, which helps you to aim; there is the long barrel, that makes the aim sure and that puts power into it; and there is the trigger, very small, but hitting the one spot where the charge is exploded.

That rifle is an object filled full of suggestions for us.

We, too, need to hold steady. A wobbler is a failure.

A piece of glue was asked how to succeed, and said, "Select some proper task, and then stick to it." That is the way a postage stamp carries your letter.

"I have noted with pride that through thick and
through thin
You cling to a thing till you do it.
And whatever your aim, you are certain to win,
Because you seem bound to stick to it.
Then I turn to whatever my hands are about,
And with fortified purpose renew it
And the end soon encompass for which I set out
If only like you I stick to it."

I do not know who the author of that is, but he was right. He is a rifle.

We too need to take aim.—Did you ever see the small boy the first time he was allowed to hold a gun?

He held it up, shut his eyes, and bang! it went off, but he had not the first idea where the shot went to.

Take aim, my boy. Look along the sight and see where you are shooting. See if there is anything to shoot.

They say there is a tombstone in one of Europe's royal cemeteries with these words on it:

"Here lies a monarch who with the
best of intentions, never
carried out a single plan."

And to make the aim sure, and put power behind it, there is need of a long barrel. That barrel keeps the shot in. You could have a lot of gunpowder lying around loose and put a match to it and have a regular Fourth of July blaze, but it would not do much. But put a little bit of powder behind a rifle ball and hedge that ball in with a barrel, and bang! it goes with terrific power—a force strong enough to go through a sheet of iron.

That is why you go to school and why you are taught to obey, and why you have to follow rules, and why they drill you and put you under discipline. It gives you power.

The free girl and boy is not the one who can do anything he or she wants to do. That is not liberty, that is license. The free girl and boy is the trained one, and that means hard work and effort and holding in, and ruling.

I knew a girl who used to sit at a piano four hours a day, just lifting her fingers. It was dreadfully tiring, but you should have heard her play after she got the power.

Don't you go growling about being made to do this, that and the other thing. If you were not so made, you would never do anything by-and-by.

Lots of young people would like to be well known, and called a genius, and a wonder, and shine out so that people would look at them as they passed by. Well, genius is just sweating over things. Genius means hard work. It means being

intense—that is a word that suggests elastic pulled out. We call it tense. It is the pulled out elastic that, when let go, makes the power of your catapult.

Columbus was a great sailor and a great man. In his journal is found this sentence: "That day we sailed westward, which was our course."

Think of those last four words. He set himself to do a thing—made a course and did it, followed it, and he got there. That is what a rifle does.

And all the great world people were like that.

Jesus "set His face" to go to Jerusalem.

One of my University class was the champion mile runner of America. I guess he would not mind if I told you his name. It was George Orton.

At the University games a lot of us students were sitting in the bleachers watching the contests. One of them was the mile race and Orton was in it. As they settled down for the mile jog, you could see them watching one another, and trying to keep as close together as possible until the last lap.

Then some one said, "Look at Orton!" And as we looked, we saw the great runner coming down the track with his face as though turned into granite, his eyes set, his teeth together, and every muscle hard as steel. He did not seem to be the same person. "His face was set" and in a second his breast had touched the tape line at the winning post.

Paul said, "This one thing I do," and it was because he put all his passion and force behind one great object that he became a rifle in the hands of the Christ.

The Book of Proverbs says, "Let thine eyes look straight forward."

Oh, girls and boys, if you want to make your mark in the world, choose a great aim, endure the work that brings it near, and then go at it and stay with it!

It was one of the most wonderful mornings of history when was fought the battle of Vimy Ridge, that helped to turn back the German hosts.

I had a friend in Vancouver who stood at one end of that fiery line, at the early zero hour that day. He said it was the most majestic sight he ever saw when, in the early gray dawn, three thousand artillery opened at once and belched forth fire and shot all concentrated on one spot. He said it was so terrible that he could hardly think of even a pin being left on the ground.

It was a clean sweep, that barrage that prepared for the bayonet charge of the Canadian Brigade.

All victory is won by that concentration of purpose.

Do you not want victory?

I am sure you do not want to be defeated in your life. You want to make a bull's eye. If you do, take a definite aim; form your plan and fire in that direction.

Do you know that one of the Old Testament words for sin means "missing the mark"?

You and I are not made to hit the target of life on the outside edge. We are made to hit it in the centre.

Therefore, young folks, be a rifle with a single aim, and make your bull's eye!

There is a poem by a great man called Goethe. It is a little hard, but I believe you can understand it if you study it out, and it is worth a little study. Here it is:

"Are you in earnest? Choose the very minute
What you can do, or think you can begin it.
Boldness has genius, power, magic in it.
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated.
Begin, and then the work will be completed."

XXVII

THE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—THE BELT AND PUTTEE

NEARLY every girl and boy loves a uniform. I am not sure but that grown-up people do too.

Now, a uniform has to be neat. If it is not, it looks the opposite of attractive.

And two things help to make it neat and trim: One is the belt that holds the tunic in, and the other the puttees that fold up the trouser legs. They make the soldier smart-looking. As the modern small boy says, "They are classy!"

And they are so useful.

To-day, golfers and outdoor sports, even women, put on knickers and roll up tight things that are loose, because then they can do better work and play.

The belt and puttee make the soldier firm and strong, and fit for travel and work. They brace him up, hold him together, give him support.

Now, one of the Bible messages is, "Gird up your loins." The loins are the centre of your body, where you are apt to get weak or sore backs.

Perhaps you have had that feeling come, as though you were going to break in half. It is be-

cause you have not been strong enough in the centre for the strain.

1. Why should we be girded up? Well, of course, in Bible days, and in Eastern countries, the very clothing made a hard journey or a task needing exercise very difficult. They wore flowing robes with wide sleeves, like a college gown. Now, nobody could do a trail ranger's work within that dress.

When a racer runs a race, or a boxer enters the ring, or an athlete goes into a gymnasium or on to the field, they take off all that is not necessary.

Even the Eastern people wear girdles and sashes to hold in their loose clothing.

You need to be held tight together if you want to be able to swing yourself. You can't be free in garments that cling to you, and wrap themselves about your legs and arms.

The same is true of your mind. It won't work if it is not held in.

Nor will your soul.

Jesus, in His parable, says we must have our lamps lit and our loins girded, because only then will we be ready for the chance when it comes—and it may spring on us unannounced.

That is the purpose of school and work and lessons and exercises. Life is not an easy job.

If you have read "Tom Brown's Schooldays" (and I hope you have or will) you will find the author saying that "life is no fool's or sluggard's

paradise, but a battlefield ordained from of old, where there are no spectators, and the youngest must take his stand, and the stakes are life and death."

If you go to a hockey match or a baseball game, you can sit in the grand-stand and look on; but there is no grand-stand in life, and no looking on. We are all in it, and, therefore, we need to be ready.

Now, being ready is just girding yourself—gathering yourself together so you can make an effort. And if you do not make an effort, you will leave behind no mark, any more than you do when you put your finger in a pail of water and pull it out again.

2. The puttee is to make us tight and strong and ready to march; but the belt is also to hang things on.

That is the worst of life—we have to carry a lot of burdens. Some of them, of course, we make for ourselves. We often tie things on to us by silly acts and sins. The best thing to do with them is not to have any, or get rid of them as soon as possible.

But there are real burdens that God sends. They are His gifts to us, and we need a place to carry them—duties and tasks and home calls and troubles and sorrows. Oh, there are a lot of things to do, and if you have no belt, where in the world are you going to hang them all?

3. Now the Bible says a splendid girdle is "Truth."

A true girl and boy is well-knit, straight up and down, like a perpendicular line. You know where to find them. They will always win out. They have no sloppy one-sidedness that will tip them over. And they can carry a lot of things on their belt.

A false boy and girl double up when a burden is put on them. They are too weak to bear up. But a true one stands so nobly, and whatever you lay on them, you know they will carry safely.

And what is Truth?

It means being real, whole, not broken up, not a fraction, but a whole number. It means ringing true, like a bell without a crack.

In early times, they used sometimes to make images, and when they got cracked and old, they would patch them up with wax and putty and then paint them over till they looked lovely; and sold them for real things. By-and-by the weather and time wore off the paint and dug out the wax, and then they stood in their shameful cracky look, and people said, do not be waxy, but genuine right through.

The word "sincere" is from two Latin words, sine—without, and cera—wax.

The true girl and boy is unwaxed. There is no paint covering up nasty cracks. They ring true.

I went into a store once in Toronto and had an

awful experience. I bought some article and sent in an American cart-wheel. That, you know, is a silver dollar. It shot up the wind tubes to the office, and in a jiffy it was shot back down again, with an acid stain on it.

It was a false piece! What do you think of that? I was so confused, for I feared they might think I was trying to pass bad money. And me a minister too!

When it struck the testing table, it did not ring right, and the acid soon told the story, and I got the old fraud back again.

Any life like that has not got on the girdle of truth. It is like a glittering object on the ground that looks like a diamond, but proves to be glass. It is like a piece of timber that looks all right and is put in the ship, but it had a worm inside, and became rotten, and the ship sank.

Gird yourselves up, girls and boys. Fasten up your life, strong and firm, and be true, and you will have a great help in being a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

XXVIII

THE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—THE KIT BAG

WHEN you go on a journey you carry a suitcase, or you take a trunk, in which you place your belongings that you will need while away from home.

When the soldier goes off to the war he has a bag in which he puts some of the things he cannot do without—things that are absolutely necessary.

First. It is wonderful when you come down to bed rock, how few things we need, after all. Most of us are overburdened.

There is hardly a girl or boy that has not a whole lot of unused baggage lying around—old toys and books, old ribbons and hats. They fill the bureau drawer and lie around the room and take up space in cupboards until your mother simply gives them away or burns them up.

When I left Vancouver to come to Toronto, I had a bonfire in my back yard for a lot of stuff that I used to think I had to save up.

Houses are like that, too. I roomed once in a very beautiful home, but the drawing-room was so full of furniture that you could not turn around without getting a bump somewhere.

There are a lot of things in our homes and a lot of material in our lives, and a lot of stuff in

our minds that is just like piles of old lumber in the fence corner, doing no good; or like a lot of old clothes in a cupboard, only gathering moths.

The soldier knows that, and he just carries around what he can use, and the kit bag is where he keeps them. It is a very fine thing to be able to carry useful things around with us.

A useless girl or boy is usually in the road.

What is the good of a lot of clothes if you can't wear them?

I saw a man on the vessel on which I once sailed to Australia who had seventeen suits of clothes, and their chief use was in keeping busy his cabin boy, who brushed them.

And what's the use of a lot of information in your mind if you can't use it?

I do not know which is the worse, having too many things or having nothing useful.

I have read of a beehive in California, away out on the face of a cliff. It is stored full, but all day long hundreds of bees swarm around the cave; and while men have put on leather suits, very little has ever been secured from that nest of useless sweetness.

But second: The kit bag has in it not merely things the soldier has to daily use—socks to keep his feet warm and dry; brushes to keep the snarl out of his hair; razors to keep his face smooth; soap to keep him clean—but he also stores away in it precious things, and they are useful too: Letters

from home—what would he do without their messages of love?

They say the saddest sight in a camp was the disappointed face of a boy when the mail came and there was nothing for him.

If you are a young person away from home and forget the old folks, that's the way your mother looks when you neglect to write.

> "The tender words unspoken,
> The letters never sent,
> The long-forgotten messages,
> The wealth of love unspent.
> For these some hearts are breaking,
> For these some loved ones wait;
> So show them that you care for them,
> Before it is too late."

There are books and photographs of those beloved, looked at first thing in the morning and last at night; and when the kit and all belongings are left in store when the battle is on, those precious photos are taken out and hidden next the heart, under the tunic.

There, too, is the Testament, placed by loving hands when the outfit was packed—perhaps the mother gave her own to her boy when he left; and there is a smudge mark yet on the cover, where a tear dropped, that she tried very hard not to let fall, but could not help it.

Many a boy valued that Testament, and after

some of them were found, there lay in the pocket, with the pages glued together by the blood, and sometimes torn with a bullet mark, the gift of pious love.

Oh, how grand it is to have a life filled with precious values—the values that make us richer, and help to adorn us and cheer us and brighten us.

A little child on the seashore saw a bright spangle. Picking it up, she found it was attached to a gold thread, and drawing the thread, she found other spangles, which she wound round her neck and body, covering it with brightness. And as we go through life, it is very lovely to pick up the precious sparkling things filled with love value, and wind them around our hearts.

Dear girls and boys, have you anything of value in your lives—of a real worth while—real costly things?

Marbles and toys and air balloons, and wrist watches and spats and gorgeous neckties are all right; but you will need more if you are going to amount to anything, and I suggest you store up your kit bag with precious things of noble thoughts and full minds and sweet memories and useful deeds, for it is not what you have or how much you weigh that counts, but what you are and what you can do.

Did you ever hear people discussing somebody, and did you overhear some one say, "Oh, there's nothing in him." There may be feet in his boots,

and arms in his coat sleeves and legs in his pants, and a head in his hat, but his real self is empty—"To Let" is seen written over his face.

Be something in this toiling age
Of busy hands and feet.
A light upon some darkened page,
A shelter from the heat.
Be found upon the workmen's roll,
Go sow or plant or plough.
Bend to the task with willing soul.
Be something, somewhere, now.

Third: Each soldier has to have a kit bag, and he puts his name on it in white paint, so that everybody knows it is his.

You and I have to carry our belongings with us too, good or bad, and nobody can steal them, as sometimes happened with the boys' kit bags. Ours always go along with us.

It seems so foolish not to gather good belongings that you won't want to bury or throw away. Life is a queer sort of thing, and the strange thing is that while you carry your belongings with you, you are also sending them on ahead of you, and they build your future home.

A woman once dreamed that she died and went up to heaven. Angel guides took her through the lovely city and showed her its wonderful streets and homes.

One was a magnificent palace with a beautiful situation, and great towers and windows. She

asked who it was for and was surprised to hear it was for her footman who did the dirty work around the stable and house.

In another street was a little bungalow—beautiful too, for everything was fair and lovely, but still very small and humble. She asked who that was for, and was told it was to be her future home. In disgust she said, "What! Do you know who I am, and how much wealth I have? You give my ignorant footman a great palace, and me this little bit of a place!" And the angel quietly said, "Well, madam, we are doing our best with what's sent up."

So you see your kit bag possessions are with you now, but the real possessions of your life, your thoughts and words and deeds are helping to form the home you will some day live in forever.

I think it would be a good idea to see that we have only the best, and send on only those things that will help build a beautiful home of the soul.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, a great American writer, once wrote these words:

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll;
Leave thy low vaulted past;
Let each new temple nobler than the last
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea."

XXIX

THE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—THE UNIFORM

THE uniform helps to change a variegated mass of men into an army. A regiment would not look anything like what it does were it not for the uniform.

It is the kilts that not only have a history but that give the Highlanders their glorious influence. The Scotchman thinks the kilties are the only soldiers, and one can respect his enthusiasm, for great deeds have been done by the troops from the land of the heather.

The uniform puts the finishing touch on a soldier.

I have seen the boys take the oath, but it was after they visited the storehouse and came out in the glory of the khaki, with their swagger stick, that you saw written all over them, "I'm a soldier of the king."

That uniform is the badge of service. Every one who wears it is a marked man. His uniform proclaims him. He does not need a tag.

A girl was once converted at some church meetings, and she went up to an old member and with shining face, said, "Oh, Mr. Blank, I am a Christian, and I wish you were one too." The old man flushed and said, "My dear little girl, I have been

a Christian for forty years." "Oh, I'm sorry," she said, "I'm sorry I spoke. I never knew."

He was a Christian but nobody knew. He lacked the marks.

But a soldier, once he dons the uniform, is at once known.

More than that, a uniform is like a flag. It represents the empire. Each nation has its own flag and its own uniform, and wherever its soldiers go, they carry, so to speak, their country with them.

If they are bad, they dishonour their flag and bring disgrace on their colours and the uniform.

One of the greatest motives behind the men in the war was "the honour of the company or the regiment or the battalion or the brigade."

One company lost a trench and were heartsick with depression, and when the time came, half dead with weariness and hunger and thirst, they retook it and were happy because they had saved the honour of the company. The uniform means that.

A bad man or a coward not only hurts himself, but he brings disgrace on the company. Every deed of evil or cowardice comes back on the flag and the country to which the man belongs who wears its uniform.

The uniform speaks to the soldier of duty—it makes duty easier. In New York the street sweepers were clad in a white uniform and they say

every man felt a little bigger and better and more anxious to do better work because of the uniform.

A boy in the Trail Rangers or the Boy Scouts can't help feeling the influence of his uniform.

A mother told me about her daughter, a Girl Guide, doing something wrong in school one day when she had on the uniform. The mother said, "Oh, daughter, you did not do it with the uniform on, did you?" And it nearly broke the child's heart.

You can't do things in uniform you might do in plain clothes. It makes you a member of a league of honour, in spite of yourself. It bucks a fellow up and sort of puts him on his honour. It says, "Here, you are not your own now. You belong as you never did before to your country, and your country is counting on you." A chap can hardly go back on that!

The uniform proclaims loyalty too.

To don the khaki meant that the boy heard the call. The S. O. S. sounded his country's need, and up he sprang because he was a loyal subject. Of course, some loyal subjects could not and did not have to join the army. But every one who could did, unless he was a shirker and a slacker.

Loyalty means doing your duty. It means ready to do your bit whether at home or on the firing-line. It does not matter which, if it is your bit.

More than that, the uniform puts responsibility on the wearer. You know how big even a boy can feel when he joins the Boys' Brigade or the Boy Scouts and gets a uniform on. It makes him feel inches taller, and his chest gets thicker, which is perfectly right. He will do things in uniform and under the spell of what it all means that before he would hardly dare believe to be possible.

The uniform is full of history, just as the flag is, and somehow when it is donned, all the great history presses on the wearer and makes a bigger man of him, if he has anything in him, and makes him able for big things.

> "Britain be proud of such a son!—
> Deathless the fame which he has won.
> Only a boy—but such a one;
> Standing forever by his gun;
> There was his duty to be done—
> And he did it."

If your dad had a boy or if you had a brother who heard the world's call, and signed up and was measured and had his muscles and heart and lungs and eyes all tested, and then in one big moment, while his dad's throat was choking, stood up erect before the officer and swore in for service; and if later that boy or brother came up home all shining in buttons, with his boots black and his puttees neat and strong, and his belt tightening up his loins—you know just how a new passion of loyalty would surge through you.

If you were a girl you would be sorry, and decide to try to go as a nurse, or perhaps drive a car; if you were a young boy, you would hit your toy drum harder and step out more briskly and tell all the other boys you thought you could get the job of a drummer.

Oh, the uniform does help to deepen our sense of loyalty.

Now, girls and boys, I am telling you all this for a purpose. You know there is another army all over the world called the Salvation Army, made up of people who wear uniforms and play bands and go to war against the worst of all enemies, the one called Sin. And they do a wonderful lot of good in the world and deserve our respect and support. They have won by their loyalty even homage from kings.

But did you know your father and mother, who are members of the church, belong to an army too, and wear a uniform too? It is the great army of Jesus Christ, those who have sworn to be His servants and to do His work, and the uniform is just their Christian life.

I know some church members do not look or act any different from those who are not. But the real member tries to and when he joins he puts on the uniform of a Christlike life which works for Christlike ends.

When the Christians first began to live it all out, the world used to say, "See how these Christians

love one another." Their Christian membership was like a badge. Everybody knew where they belonged.

I want to ask you to join up there and put on the uniform of church membership. I will tell you why.

It helps to make you a better Christian. It is taking your stand on His side, and you can't do that, if you mean it, without being made deeper and stronger.

I do not think any one can be as good outside the church as in it, and I am sure we should be better inside than out of it. Those who are good without going to church are good because the church has made it possible. Just as all who were not in the army were safe because the great army and navy were protecting them. But it is not fair to borrow other people's money to live on. You should have your own. And it is not fair to get the good the church brings us without coming in and helping her. It is not fair to give no return for service received.

So I ask you to join God's church because it helps you, and it helps the church and it tells everybody where you stand.

Then it expresses your loyalty. Jesus gives us His church and if everybody refused to come in, it would die, and His work would perish.

Announce your loyalty now! Fight the fight now!

"He is counting on you!
On a love that will share
In His burden of prayer,
For the souls He has bought
With His life blood and sought,
Through His sorrow and pain
To win 'home' yet again.
He is counting on you;
If you fail Him—what then?"

It is very hard to be a citizen-at-large, that is, a citizen of the world. You have to be a citizen of some country.

A great Scotch poet said:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land."

To love the world you have to know how to love your own part of it.

And so in order to tell the world of our loyalty to Christ, we need to fasten down to the church that stands for Christ.

To have a sort of general love for God without helping to spread His cause will soon result in the loss of your love for God.

Take away the church for ten years, and you would not want to live in your town after.

And then it is a fine thing to put the church uniform on as early as possible. It is not fair to live your life for yourself and your own pleasures

until you get too old for them, and then bring what is left and offer it to God.

In the Old Testament days it was the unblemished lamb that was asked for; and, dear girls and boys, God wants you now, in the days of your youth. The church needs your fresh, bright young lives. The future so big with promise needs strength and vigour, and you have it. Therefore, do not stand off, but line up soon, and then you will have a long life of service, and not a poor little meagre piece at the end.

The sooner you become an out-and-out worker for Jesus, the more you will be able to help Him. There is no life sadder than to have to go out at the end with no record of service.

A young man, dying, had given himself to God but seemed sad and troubled, and they asked him what was the matter, had he lost his trust? "Oh, no," he said, "not that, but I have to go and meet Jesus with empty hands!"

And some one wrote a hymn which says:

> "Must I go and empty handed,
> Thus my dear Redeemer meet,
> Not one day of service give Him,
> Lay no trophies at His feet?"

You, girls and boys, put the Christian uniform on now; join up soon. Then think of the long and splendid record of service that will be yours if you stand loyal to the army of Jesus Christ.

XXX

"Q" AND "S" GROCERY

DID you ever hear of that sort of a store? When I first saw the sign I wondered what it meant. I had heard of college societies with letters that describe them, and I had seen letters like that on music sheets; but whatever could it stand for over a grocery store?

Perhaps it meant "Quick and Sure" or perhaps it was the name of the men who owned it, only I could not see why they should be ashamed of their name, for most merchants want their name known.

At last some one told me it stood for "Quality" and "Service." Then I saw what a splendid sign it was.

It made people curious. It was so mysterious-looking that everybody would ask about it and talk about it, and that would advertise it; while the meaning, once found out, made you feel confident. A store that serves out quality is worth going to.

Any one who can show that he has quality and that he is anxious to serve is worth getting acquainted with.

Think of those two things.

(*a*) Quality.

So many hunt after quantity. When I was a very small boy my grandfather used to offer me my choice between a nickel and a big copper penny, and I took the penny every time. It was more to hold. I could feel it better.

Every child would rather have a big apple than a little one, and they all hunt the plate for the biggest piece of cake or pie. Some big people are no better, for they do not always look for quality, either.

Big things do appeal to us.—Big mountains and big seas, and big trees and big houses, and big horses and big automobiles, and big men, and I suppose it has a place.

It is wonderful to stand in the mountains and just feel their great size; it is an inspiration to go out to British Columbia and stand in some forest corridor and look up at those great Douglas firs, that tower up above your heads and spread their branches over a field.

In Vancouver, at Stanley Park, there is one so big that autos back into it and have a photograph taken.

But after all, the chief thing is not size, but meaning and character. There are some big vegetables that are so big they are no use. They are soft and overgrown.

Soul is more important than bulk.

"For tho' the giant ages heave the hill
And break the shore and ever more
Make and break and work their will
Though world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us each with different powers
And other forms of life than ours
What know we greater than the soul."

Have you ever gone out on a frosty night and looked up at the sky and thought of the great spaces above you, and the sun millions of miles off? Did you know that if a train travelling one mile every minute could fall off the earth and keep going, it would take forty millions of years to reach the nearest fixed star? And yet your soul is more important than it all!

"Knowest thou the value of a soul immortal?
Behold the midnight glory, worlds on worlds
Amazing pomp. Redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand add, add twice ten thousand more
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls the astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor."

There is a wonderful instrument used by men of science, called a microscope, and it shows us that the smallest things are more wonderful even than the big things you can see with your eye.

The little insect that makes the coral, that is so graceful, is an object of wondrous beauty under the microscope.

When you buy a flower, it is not the biggest you want, it is the richest and loveliest, the one of quality.

What is it makes a man? Not size. That may make a prize-fighter, but who wants to be a prize-fighter? He is muscle and bone and beef, but that is not manhood.

A real man is a gentleman, even if he is not much to boast of in size. The real signs are not those of bigness, but something inside of him—the peculiar quality that makes you honour and love him.

Here is what Margaret Sangster says of it:

THE LITTLE GENTLEMAN

I knew him for a gentleman
By signs that never fail;
His coat was rough and rather worn,
His cheeks were thin and pale;
A lad who had his way to make
With little time for play;
I knew him for a gentleman
By certain signs to-day.

He met his mother on the street,
Off came his little cap;
My door was shut, he waited there
Until I heard his rap.

He took the bundle from my hand;
And when I dropped the pen,
He sprang to pick it up for me—
This little gentleman of ten.

He does not push or crowd along.
His voice is gently pitched;
He does not fling his books about
As if he were bewitched.
He stands aside to let you pass,
He always shuts the door.
He runs on errands willingly,
To forge or mill or store.

He thinks of you before himself;
He serves you if he can,
For in whatever company
The manners make the man.
At ten or forty 'tis the same.
The manner tells the tale;
And I discern the gentleman
By signs that never fail.

I have read of three women who were once talking about pretty hands. Not one of them tested the matter by the size of their hands, and yet they, too, forgot quality. One said she kept hers pretty by washing them in milk; another dipped hers in berry juice, and the third washed hers in the fragrance of flowers.

While they were talking, a poor old woman came and asked for something to eat, and they were so busy talking about the kind of hands they had they could not help her.

Another woman whose hands were worn with work, and hardened by the sun, and all wrinkled, and who was passing by, listened to the poor old woman's cry, and fed her. Then *she* asked the three what they had been doing, and they said, "We will leave it to you to say whose hands are the loveliest." And do you know, girls and boys, she passed by the hands of milky whiteness and the hands that smelt of flowers, and turning to the working woman said, "She has the prettiest, for she uses them for gifts to others!"

It is quality of character that counts.

You may be as big as a giant and as strong as a horse, and yet lack in the only thing that really counts or lasts—a quality that gives you worth.

What is worth anyhow? What are you worth? You say, "Oh, my daddy is a millionaire. We have a lovely house and gardens, and I get new dresses every month. Whew! We are worth a lot!"

Well, perhaps you are, for a man can have money and something more. If he has only money piles, he is terribly poor.

You are worth just what you are. Just what your quality is.

They used to talk years ago of "ladies of quality" and they meant the upper uppers—the swells and people with titles. Now we know there are splendid ladies with titles, but it is not the title that makes them ladies of quality, it is what they carry in their hearts.

I will tell you how to get character quality.

"I would be true, for there are those who trust me,
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer,
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

"I would be friend to all—the foe—the friendless;
I would be giving and forget the gift,
I would be humble for I know my weakness,
I would look up, and laugh—and love—and lift."

But you need quality in work too. We live in a pushing day when we judge by quantity. Pile things up, drive ahead, keep moving, hustle along. Do a lot of things.

Now, there is a better rule—not how much, but how well done.

I have a lovely picture with a beautiful frame that has a history. It is the picture of The Doctor. You all have seen it.—Where the good man is sitting by the side of the sick child, studying the case, the lamplight shining on the face, and the father and mother in tears and anxiety in the background.

Some Scotch craftsmen who knew me framed it in bird's-eye maple, inlaid with basswood, and the frame has the story on it—The Iris plant on the sides, a symbol of immortality, the Egyptian symbol of eternity above, and the sand-glass below; all meant to illustrate the battle between life and death in the picture itself.

Now, the frame is not very big, but it is very beautiful, because the Scotch handicraft men have as their ideal to make every piece of work as perfect in quality as possible.

Solid, steady, sure work tells, not always brilliant.

Lots of brilliant people in school never amount to anything afterward, because they lack the quality of always sticking at it and doing each thing the best way possible.

If you ever watch men bowling on the green, or curling on the ice, you know that a shot that is too swift, that has too much quantity in it, goes through the house; the telling shot is the quiet, steady one with the right quality of delivery in it.

(*b*) Service.

That grocery store said, "We want to help you." It was thinking of others and living for others.

The motto of the Prince of Wales is "Ich dien," which means, "I serve."

In long past years the big man was the fellow who bossed the job.—He was called the ruler, the magistrate.

To-day, especially since Jesus, the big man is the minister.—I do not mean the preacher in your church, but the man who gets down beside the people and serves them. You know "minister" is a Latin word that means "servant." Every one who tries to serve other people is a minister. He is the biggest man everywhere. The biggest word to-day is "Service."

There were four letters in the war that were very touching to me, C. A. S. C.—The Canadian Army Service Corps.

They worked for everybody. They were supply centres. The army never could have done its work without them. They were worth all the honour could be given them, because they were the army helpers.

Oh, if everybody would only help, what a happy world this would be!

Most of our troubles are because we want to be helped. It makes us selfish and jealous and mean and grabby.

The war came from it—nations seeking to get.

School is made unhappy by it. It spoils play and games and dinner tables and Sunday Schools and churches and lives.

God serves and nature serves. Parents and teachers serve.

Why don't you? What do you want to be always getting for?

A small boy once put a note by his mother's plate, and when she came to breakfast, she found a bill.

"Mother, in account with Jack."

—To going messages	$1.00
" carrying coal	.50
" cutting the grass	.75
" gathering eggs and chopping wood	1.00
Total	$3.25

The dear mother never said a word, but left the bill on the table. Next morning a note was at the boy's plate.

"Jack, in account with Mother."

—To looking after his baby years.	$0.00
" washing and cleaning clothes	0.00
" mending stockings	0.00
" helping all his life	0.00
Total	$0.00

The second day a shame-faced boy tore up that first bill and later on laid his head in his mother's lap and cried.—I guess you know why!

Before a train starts, the wipers go all over her to wipe and examine the engine; the fireman comes and builds and starts the fire; the engineer comes and goes carefully all over the machinery; the mechanic comes and tests all the wheels; and then she is linked on the train, the lever is pulled, and puff! puff!—away she goes, drawing her long line of passengers and freight!

You are going through the process now of getting ready. By-and-by you will be hitched on to some life job.

See you get ready properly, and get coupled to the right train; and then pull for all your might, and help serve humanity by bringing in your load to the final station where some day we all must land.

XXXI

BETSY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW, the poet, tells us that

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us,
Footprints in the sands of time.

"Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, may take heart again."

That is all beautifully true. It is also true that many a humble, obscure life can teach us lessons of trust and loyalty, and devotion to good things.

The story I am going to tell you is about a humble Indian girl, whose forefathers had been all savages, but whose home was a Christian one among the simple native children of the North.

Over fifty years before the time of our story, an unchristianized band of Indians fished in the inland waters, trapped in the forest for mink and otter, muskrat, bear or silver fox; and paddled the lake in birch barks; sometimes supplementing

their paddle strokes by a sail contrived of a blanket fastened to a pole cut from a neighbouring bluff.

From far over the Atlantic came a brave man, with a heart full of peace, and anxious to acquaint the native with the brightness of his own life.

It meant much to settle in such a district in early days, long before the iron horse had made a path across the prairie; days when the trail wound its wandering way over rock and soil, skirting the bluffs, penetrating forest, mounting granite hills or hiding itself in rocky ravines.

And even after the perils of the trail were passed, there still remained the privations of the lonely Mission, cut off from companionship, with the keen biting winds of winter, the ice-locked lake, the powdery-dry snow falling and falling until one wondered if the air had turned to snow, and when morning came little was left of the buildings except the chimney tops; the whole Mission was buried in white as though shut up in the garments of the tomb.

Twice a year the mail carrier braved first the heat of summer and then the rigour of winter, and when the contents of the mail-bag were emptied on the parlour floor what delight in once more touching the outside world. It was like reading history after it was past to scan the doings of the year. It was like a breath from the dear old home to see the familiar postage stamps and to read the welcome words of dear ones from letters,

enclosing home flowers and fragrant love messages.

In all this life no one made greater sacrifice than the missionary's wife, who saw no women save her dusky pagan sisters with the dark brown eyes with a yearning look in them.

Many years ago Keewatin, the "North Wind" with his little daughter Akwinanoh were sitting by their wigwam door looking down the long stretch of the Northern Lake, when suddenly a strange apparition some miles away startled them into attention. Their cry gathered almost the whole camp, which watched with wonder and amaze a changing object moving toward them, but unexplainable by even their keen Indian sight.

Whatever it was it gleamed and glistened in the setting sun until finally Keewatin, with a glimmer of inspiration in his eyes, said, "I know what it is. It is an island of light." He was nearer the truth than he knew, for it was the tin canoe of the English missionary, the tin reflecting, in scintillating rays, the sunlight, and the canoe bearing the messenger of a light that so far had never yet shone for them. Every stranger excites the curiosity of the savage man, but Akwinanoh had a new object of interest from that day, for with the white man came a tiny white baby that soon grew into the pet of the reserve!

The little daughter of the North Wind adopted

the white man's child as her special charge, and while the missionary worked and prayed to bring the Gospel of the Christ-child into the hearts of the Saulteaux, another little child slowly but surely worked its way into the life of the brown maiden, transforming her, and through its gentle pressure Akwinanoh soon yielded to the influence of the Gospel of Bethlehem's babe.

Later she became the Christian mother of her who was known as Betsy. Betsy grew into a girlhood that was beautiful, even from the white man's point of vision.

She was gentle as the breath of the south wind, with a sweet grace of manner and a consistency of life that made her a strong support to the man who came to them in his canoe.

To be a follower of Christ seemed natural to her, for she had His spirit, and was full of unselfish thoughtfulness.

One day as she was walking along the river edge she saw a child slip and fall. Without a moment's hesitation she plunged into the deep, brown stream, six fathoms at the rock, and brought the child safe to its parents' tepee. It was early in the spring and the waters were cold, and before night a raging fever laid her low.

For weeks she suffered, waited upon by the heathen medicine man, uncomplainingly swallowing the hideous compounds from his mix-all bot-

tles, and slowly sinking under the fatal grip of pneumonia.

The young husband refused at first to allow the approach of the white doctor, and the missionary could only pray and hope.

Finally, when one day the light burned low, the obstinate young Indian bowed before the compelling force of necessity, and proper medical attendance began. Then the doctor took hold, nursing her as though she were his own child; watching symptoms and succeeding in bringing back hopeful conditions into the wasted frame.

It was a gay day when the report circulated through the camp that Betsy, the beloved, was recovering under the magic spell woven around her by the English medicine man, for no one could fail to notice the sweet spirit and to wish for victory in the stern battle brought on through her unselfish act.

One day in the evening, the missionary found her, oh so quiet and worn, but gentle as ever. She could speak a little English and seemed glad to think that she was cared for.

"Well, Betsy," said the missionary, "you have been very ill."

"Yes," she answered sweetly, "very ill, but the good light the white man brought has been shining in my heart and all is well."

"We are glad, Betsy," said the missionary, "that God is going to spare you. We could ill do

without you. Your life has been a benediction to the whole reserve."

"Oh, Missionary," said Betsy, weeping, "do not say that. When I think of the story of His love it makes me ashamed. But I do wish my people could feel and know as I do. I would like to stay among them for a little while, for I love them. But sometimes I have a feeling in my heart that perhaps it is not to be. I had a dream last night, Missionary. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, Betsy," he replied, "but are you strong enough to talk so long?"

"Oh, yes; I feel quite strong this evening, thanks to the white doctor.

"I dreamed I was going along the trail when suddenly away before me I saw a wonderful light. It was coming my way and as it got nearer it took on the form of a person. Soon it stood beside me and I saw that it was the face of Christ, but oh, it was too beautiful to describe! And I said, 'Have you come for me?' 'No,' said a voice, 'not yet.' And I thought I was so disappointed, and I said, 'Well, will you be long?' And the answer was, 'No, not very long.' And as it spoke it disappeared, and I awakened."

He listened, hushed and awestruck at the story of the dream of this dusky sister of the plain.

"Well, Betsy," said he, after a moment of silence, "it is all well. That dream may not come literally true, but the spirit of it is yours, and some

day He will come to your people, and when the right moment arrives He will come for you too. Shall we pray, Betsy?"

"Oh, yes sir, pray," she said, "pray for me, but do not forget my people, and my man."

The night shadows were growing darker as reverently he knelt beside the prostrate form of that northern saint, Indian in race, but akin to God the Father of us all. A daughter of the King, if ever there was one.

Then reaching out her hand, she took from a corner of the tent near her couch a birch-bark basket, made by her own hands, and sewn with sweet grass. Giving it to the missionary, she said, "Keep that as a remembrance for your kindness in coming to see a poor sick Indian child."

That night the northwest wind began to moan. Soon it bore down with the terrific force of a gale, in howling wrath. Drenching rain fell; wild gusts of storm dashed against the Mission buildings.

The wildness of the storm howling in mercilessness in the deep night stillness struck chill to the heart of every one. It was one of those sudden storms that sometimes sweep in gales over the north country, gone in a few minutes, but ofttimes leaving a wake of destruction.

When morning dawned, some of the boats were driven fifty yards into the forest; trees around the camp were stripped of limbs, and great rents ran down the bark and fibre of more than one.

But the worst deed done by it was when it lifted the tent off Betsy's sleeping form, and left her to the wild elements whose work was soon finished in her death through shock and wet.

It was not long until the news spread throughout the settlement, and the Indian wailing could be heard in that lonely, long-drawn lamentation that is theirs.

Two days later crowds of Indians thronged the little Mission Chapel. They came dressed in their prints of all colours and fantastic variety of costume; some with yellow handkerchiefs on their heads. Purple, blue, white, red were seen everywhere, but mourning was on every face, and sorrow sat on every bowed form.

A touching service in Cree, with plaintive music set to the words of Christian hymns, and then, one by one, men, women and children came to the front and printed a kiss upon the cold brow of the dead woman, while some whispered messages to her to be taken to the land of blessed spirits.

It was a sad procession that wound its way through the Mission fields, over the hills, across the bridge and up the opposite side of the ravine. There, amid the wooden monuments that marked the resting-place of relatives and friends, was laid the sacred dust of Betsy.

As the coffin was lowered, the conquering wind whistled its triumph through the limbs of the trees in the near-by forest, but it was a hollow triumph,

for beyond the forest were the hills of light and faith could see there the real conqueror, whose face once shone in beauty in Betsy's dream, and who had come now for her in the guise of the storm on which He rode, but who gave His weak one conquest through the storm.

Reverently they lowered her body, the worn-out jewel-case of Betsy, simple-hearted, large-souled, unselfish Betsy; heaped the clods upon her coffin; waved farewells across her grave and went back to the old life where storms still raged and duties dared and dangers sought to breed fears within. But many were made stronger now because of her.

Brave Betsy, dark of skin, but white of soul; true-hearted Betsy, beloved of all, foe of none; she got her death through giving another life, and for many a day her story will be told, and children will be carried to the little Indian burying-ground and shown the simple wooden cross, simple as herself, on which they will see in simple letters—

"BETSY"

XXXII

A LIFE DEGREE

THE other day the papers announced that when the Prince of Wales returns from his recent tour, he is to be given the Order of the Garter, the highest honour in the Empire in civil life, just as the V. C. is the highest in military service.

And it is a great honour to do some deed or fulfill some duty, so that a college or a nation gives you some distinguished degree which allows you to put letters after your name.

But it is all right to be proud of honours, if a fellow really earns them by hard work or genuine service. The only kind to be shunned are the kind you buy with money or get through some second-hand institution without any standard of toil.

Yet, after all is said and done, the great majority of you will perhaps never have a college degree, and will never be called over to meet the king and kneel before him, dressed up in gorgeous court clothes, while he strikes your shoulder with a sword and says, "Rise up, Sir Knight." You may never be a big lawyer and write K. C. after your signature, to show you can plead in the king's

name; or K. C. M. G., to show you are one of the select knights of the royal castle; but I want to suggest you can still wear a title, and use the letters that stand for things worth while.

"Say, Billy, would you not feel big if the day came when your friends called you Sir William?" Who knows but what they may! The big men were schoolboys with some one else, and you may be one of the coming big men.

You remember when Tom Brown went to Oxford, he used to walk around and read the names of men like Raleigh and Wycliffe, and feel two inches taller. He said, "Perhaps I may be going to make dear friends with some fellow who will change the history of England. Why shall not I? There must have been some freshmen once who were chums of Wycliffe and Raleigh!"

Now, my point is that even if you do not, you need not fail.

Some day when you read, or now when you are reading Tennyson, you will find a poem called "Idylls of the King," where he speaks of knights who are "wearing the white flower of a blameless life," and who "live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the king ——"

If you are that, then I have the power to confer on you titles, and although you may not put the letters after your name, you can if you care to—William Blank, K. C.

"K" stands for kindness, and you know,

"There's nothing so kingly as kindness;
And nothing so royal as truth;"

and you know,

"So may we in bonds of love,
Each living creature bind,
And make them gentle as a dove,
If we are only kind."

There is something very attractive about a kind man; and we should be that, for we live in lands where Jesus has been heard of, and He has filled the earth with kindness.

A street-car line was held up once in Brooklyn, the city with its roar and busy bustle, all because a kitten had got on the rails. In China, they would not have bothered, but we have learned to be kind, to be friends even to animals.

"C" means courtesy, the behaviour of a lady and gentleman in heart and home and street.

I met an Indian in the North land, which I have told you about in my talks in "Boucher" and "Betsy," whose name was John Everett.

He had been a pagan Cree, but his tribe were now Christian. His clothes were not the best and he was a poor fisherman, living in an Indian hut, but I could have put him into Buckingham Palace; and while a lot of things would have been new to him, he would not have disgraced himself, for he was a perfect gentleman.

Courtesy means being courtly; that is, fit to stand in a court and not be ashamed of your actions. Here is a definition I read of a gentleman, and which I pass on to you:

"A gentleman is clean inside and out—a man who looks neither down to the poor nor up to the rich; who is considerate of women, of children and of everybody; who is too generous to cheat and too brave to lie; who takes his share of the world and lets others have theirs; who can win without bragging and lose without squealing."

But I can add three more letters, just as sometimes you see men whose names have a lot of honours tacked on. John Smith, M. A., LL. D., C. M. S. So I would like to confer on you not only K. C., but also R. S. P.

LL. D. means Doctor of Laws; and the one who has it can wear a wonderful gown of red silk. K. G. means Knight of the Garter; the most distinguished decoration of Great Britain, bestowed by the king, and won only by a favoured few. It runs back nearly six hundred years, and gives the one who receives it the right to wear special garments; a black velvet hat with white ostrich feather plume, a gold collar with twenty pieces of gold in it, and a silver star.

P. C. means Privy Councillor; one who belongs to the council that gives special advice to the king on state affairs. They wear a Windsor uniform with buckled shoes and knee breeches, and em-

broidered coats and cocked hats, and they look quite dressed up when it is all on.

The trouble is, a man may be all this and yet not be very much else except a clothes horse. He may be a knight without being knightly, or have a degree and lack real worth.

But the degree I want you to get always stands for something real.

R. S. P.—

"R" means reverence, which is one of the chief titles, for if you have not that it matters nothing what else you have.

Reverence for God and for God's name; reverence for yourself, your body, the wonderful gift of mind, the power you have of choosing; reverence for yourself as a temple in which God wants to dwell; reverence for everything that is sacred and holy; reverence for the church and the Sunday School.

When the Prince came to Canada everything was made as beautiful as possible, and every one uncovered their head because he represented the king.

But, girls and boys, you are children of the King. You are sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Do you not think you should be very reverent toward all your life, because you represent the King?

Up among the Indians I was struck with their reverence in church and in our camp. Every

night before going to our tents we stood around the camp-fire and sang a hymn and had a good-night prayer and every one of those Indians stood, the very picture of reverence.

You have a chance in church service and Sunday School to show your reverence for all these sacred things and to be all that makes you very knightly. An irreverent boy or girl, who does not care, or who makes a mock at holy things, will never get very high; or if he does, will some day topple down, sure as fate.

"S" stands for self-control, and that means able to use yourself and to use your temper.

It means you are sitting on the wagon-seat doing the driving and not running between the shafts while something drives you. It means you are the engineer in the cab, with your hand on the lever, and if you can't be that, your life train will run away with you and then smash goes everything!

Out in the Rockies they used to have safety switches on the heavy grades so that if a train got away it would run into the switch and up-hill and stop. But a good, strong engineer, with a strong hand on the lever, usually does the work. Self-control means you are in charge and are keeping your lever well in hand.

You know, girls and boys, we are like gunpowder. We fire off easily. We have so many nerves and are so high-strung; and if we were not that, we would never do anything.

Appetites and passions do things and give us all life force, but they have to be held in, like a splendid horse kept under bit and bridle.

Out in California there is a shell called the Abalone. It attaches itself to the rock by a very strong muscle that holds so tight it has to be pried open often with a crowbar. When it is all cleaned up it is wondrously beautiful in varied colours of green and pink and opalescent pearl.

One day a little child was walking on the beach and stepped on an open shell, when quick as a flash it closed and held her there. They suppose she called out in terror, but no one heard, and the tide rose and covered her, and the body swaying at last, broke off and all they found was a boot, with bones, in the heart of the shell.

They tell of some fishermen going out to gather Abalone shells. One, in a hurry, reached out to pull it off the rock, when it closed on him and held him as in a vise, and the rising tide gradually drew him out of the boat and drowned him. You see, instead of possessing the shell it possessed him.

Lose self-control and you become possessed by something. Keep self-control and you are master.

Life's end is to be master and not mastered.

"P" stands for purity. You know how you love a flower and what a picture of purity a white flower is. The beautiful Easter lily, or a white rose with waxen petals and shining heart, what is there more lovely?

Perhaps there is something even more lovely than that. It is the face and eyes of a little child who has never yet learned to sin, and looks up into your face with a look so sweet and holy that you wonder how you could do or be anything mean in its presence.

All knights are said to seek purity. The poet says they swoop

"Down upon all things base and dash them dead;"

and one of the noblest was said to wear

"the white flower of a blameless life."

How can we be that?

By killing bad thoughts that, like worms in the timber, eat away the best, and if put into the ship, may cause it to sink in the storm. Nearly every girl and boy who falls does so because he lets some evil thought linger until it weakens him, and when temptation comes, the weak spot caves in.

Out on the prairie the wheat is often ruined by what is called "smut," a little fungi that turns the grain black and spreads rapidly by spores. If once it gets into the heart of the wheat the only way to get rid of it is by destroying the grain.

Keep yourselves pure, girls and boys—in thought, word and deed.

One of the Girl Guide laws is that of purity. "God make me beautiful within," is said to be a prayer of Socrates many centuries ago in Greece.

Pure as the snow fresh fallen; pure as the light that streams into dark spots and brightens all it touches; pure in what you look at; pure so you can be your mother's and your sister's friend; pure so you can see life's beauty, for nothing so surely blinds the eye as being impure.

Here are two degrees I offer you, girls and boys.

In college, at graduation, the Chancellor puts your hands between his as he says, "Admitto te ad gradum," which means "I admit you to a degree in this college." And one of the officers puts a college hood over your shoulders and you rise a B. A. or M. A. or M. D. or something else.

But it takes some years to get to that day.

But these degrees are yours now if you will take them. You do not have to work, and if you are really trying for them you never will be plucked. If you want them really and truly, you can have them. And if you take them, I don't care much whether you have any other or not. And if you have a lot of them and not these, all the rest will be of very little value.

A Master of Arts! That's fine. A Doctor of Laws! That's a distinction. A Knight of the Garter! That's a proud honour.

But—A kind and courteous girl and boy; a reverent, self-controlled, pure life—that's best of all!

Out where I lived at the Pacific Coast, there were a lot of people who belong to a club of mountain climbers, and everybody had an ambition to

climb as high as possible. It was a great boast if one could say he had penetrated far up Mount Robson. To reach the topmost point was what everybody desired, and they went through a lot of toil to get there.

Mountain climbing is no easy job. It takes a lot of wind and muscle and perseverance, all of which is repaid when the summit is reached and the great range lies at your feet.

Now, life degrees are peaks to which we climb. Education peak is one, and it is a splendid point to reach. Social peak is another, and it is good to be high up in society and respected by the world.

I think I would rather get to Education peak, where I graduate with a degree in learning than to Social peak, where I get a degree in place and position.

But the highest peak of all is Character peak, and if you ever want to get there and graduate in the things that last forever, then the way runs along the paths of a kindly, courteous, pure, controlled and reverent life; and one day you will wear the white robes of a life graduate, and the great Chancellor of Life will place the mark of God upon your forehead and crown you forever as a prince of the heights of Character.

William Blank, K. C., R. S. P.

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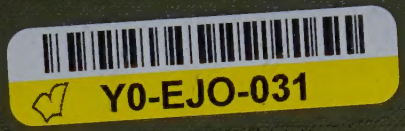
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